

THE
GENTLEMAN INSTRUCTED
IN THE
CONDUCT
OF A
Virtuous and Happy LIFE.

Written for the
INSTRUCTION
OF A
YOUNG NOBLEMAN.

To which is added,
A WORD to the LADIES.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

THE TWELFTH EDITION.

L O N D O N:

Printed for R. Ware, J. KNAPTON, C. HITCH and
L. HAWES, J. HODGES, J. and J. RIVINGTON,
J. WARD, R. BALDWIN, M. and T. LONGMAN,
J. WAUGH and W. FENNER, and M. COOPER.

MDCCLX.





THE
GENTLEMAN INSTRUCTED.

DIALOGUE VII.

Though there be no God, and though the Christian Religion be not the only saving Religion, 'tis Prudence to believe there is a God, and that the Christian Religion is the only saving Religion in the World; and to live up to the Tenets of both.

Euseb. **Y**OU have assign'd me an easy Province: The very Opening of our Cause is sufficient to gain it. That we may not beat the Air, and shoot at Rovers, let us look back upon the old Principle, *When two uncertain Propositions lie before me, I am obliged by all the Laws of Prudence to choose that which will turn to my Advantage, if true, and cannot prejudice me, if it be false;* I have establish'd this Maxim above, and I see not how you can offer against it any thing of Moment.

Theom. Go on.

Euseb. If our Opinions are true, when once we shake off these Clouds of Clay, these Mists of Dust and Ashes, which interpose between us and Eternity, we shall be in a most comfortable Condition; for the very

Moment that deprives us of Life, will repair all the Decays of Nature, all the Ruins of Time; we shall enter upon a State of Bliss, with a Spring that ever flourishes, ever blooms; upon a State inaccessible to Infirmities, unknown to Miseries, above the Stroke of Fortune, and out of the Jurisdiction of Death: Now to pass on a sudden from Fear to Assurance, from Sickness to Health, from Poverty to Plenty, and from Death to Life, must be a very entertaining Change: But what is this to that Ocean of Bliss, that flows from the Face of God? One Ray struck *Moses* almost blind; his Mortality sunk under so glorious an Appearance, and Nature was too weak to bear the Splendor of the Object, or to continue the Correspondence. The Fondness of Imagination always magnifies temporal Pleasures: Fancy over-flourishes the Object, and paints beyond the Life; they are more gaudy in our Brain, than in themselves, and the Expectation of 'em out-weighs Possession: But the Pleasures of the other World are above Expression, and Imagination too; nor can we take their Dimensions by what they are, but by what they are not: All that I can say is, they put an End to Fear, a Term to Hope, and a Stop to Desire; and certainly that Creature has touched upon the true Point of Happiness, that neither wishes to be greater, nor fears to be less.

Theom. Well, well, Sir, you will indeed be very well provided, if there be a God; but suppose there be none; you will confess then that you have underrated all the Pleasures of this Life, and sold 'em for a Dream.

Euseb. Sold 'em for a Dream, say you? You lie under a great Mistake; though there are no such Things, as God, or Heaven, I sell 'em to Advantage, and make the most of 'em: The bare Probability of a happy Eternity, has more Worth, than a certain Possession of all the Advantages of Life: These Toys end in Vanity and Vexation of Spirit; we mis-spend our Thoughts, we render ourselves cheap and despicable, by throwing away our Inclinations upon these Amusements: But I told you before, that those Pleasures you talk of are as uncertain

uncertain as the Joys of Heaven ; and in this Case, I only truck one Uncertainty for another : But then what I give is only temporal, and what I take eternal : Now, if there be a God, my Fortune is made for ever ; if there be no God, I receive small Disadvantage ; I only discard myself of those Things that are noxious to my Body, and scandalous to my Nature : At least, I live like a Man, though in the End I die like a Brute, and fall into nothing : But do you think Christians and Atheists must forswear all Pleasure ; that they must torture their Senses, and only know they live by Mortification and Torture ?

Theom. They must check Passion, arrest Appetite, and curb the very Tendency of Nature to Pleasure : They must continually stand upon their Guard, and scour about for fear of a Surprise : Now these Employments are laborious and mortifying ; a Man that is thus upon the Hoof can scarce find Leisure for Diversion : In short, who lives up to the Principles of your Belief, must divorce from Mirth, disband from Company, and like Toads, feed on the Poison of Spleen and Melancholy.

Euseb. We must indeed have a watchful Eye over our Passions, and keep 'em within the Bounds of Reason ; we must not step over the Limits of Decency, nor exceed the Prescript of Moderation ; yet we have a large Field to play in : Those Restraints are laid upon us, because an universal Liberty would undo us ; and indeed I find few Actions prohibited besides those, that either debauch Health, cross upon Reason, or undermine Society : Now he who cannot be pleased unless he prepares Work for the Doctor, unless he revels away his Wits, or unhinges the whole Frame of Commerce and Conversation, deserves, like Lions or Bears, to be hunted out of Society.

A Christian may pretend to some Enjoyment in this World, without forfeiting his Claim to the Delights of the other : If Providence has furnish'd him with an Estate, he may both keep it and use it too ; nay, he may take those Measures which Prudence and Justice shall suggest to improve it ; he may aspire handsomely to an honourable Post, and clap on his Coach a *Crownet*.

if he can procure a Patent; he may eat wholesome Food, and drink good Wine, so he does not clog his Stomach, nor offend his Brain: Indeed he must beware of Excess, and this methinks is no great Encroachment on his Freedom, no great Confinement to his Diversion; for certainly a Surfeit is not very entertaining; and a Fit of Drunkenness is no charming Trance to any but to the Spectators: If a Christian racks his Brain, shrinks his Purse, or weakens his Body with amorous Intrigues, he passes his Commission: But then he has the Freedom to marry; and what will be the Difference betwixt him and an Atheist, but that this dotes on a Mistress, and the other places his Affections on a Wife; that the one satisfies Sense at the Expence of Duty, the other joins Duty with Pleasure? So that, upon the whole, unless Sin be the only charming Circumstance, and that nothing can gratify Sense, unless it invades our Innocence, your Advantage over us is inconsiderable: But then we have other Advantages that balance this; our Pleasures are clean, untainted, and (what is more valuable) innocent; we enjoy them without Scruple, without Remorse, because without Offence; they are neither mixed with Fear, nor Shame, nor are they followed by Repentance; they bear the Test of Conscience, and dare stand a Trial at God's Tribunal.

Theom. If this be all, we stand on equal Ground: My Conscience enjoys a continual Calm; it sleeps as soundly as if it had taken an Opiate, and always comes to the Lure of my Desires.

Euseb. You are slipt into a Fit of Bantering sure; a quiet Conscience to an Atheist is very extraordinary: No, no, Sir, in spite of Debauchery and Infidelity too; it will struggle, it will turn upon you, when it finds you alone, and fly in your Face: A Dose of Claret may lay it asleep, the Noise of Company, and the Tumults of Passion may drown its Voice, or put a Stop to its Clamours; but when the Fumes are settled, when the Company withdraws, and Passion runs in its own Channel, it reads you unpleasant Lectures of Shame and Horror; its opens a full Prospect of Hell,
enlivens

enlivens Fear, it calls upon Despair, and conjures up a Battalion of Fiends to haunt you. Tell me, *Theomachus*, when the Candles are extinguish'd, and Sleep flies from your Eyes; when the Fire of Wine has boil'd up your Blood into a small Fever, are you not plagued with Doubts, and hagg'd with Apprehensions? Does not, *what if there be a God*, ring a dismal Knell in your Ears, and toss the Disease from your Head to your Heart? Would you not purchase an Assurance that there is no God, no Reckoning with a Lordship?

Theom. Such Thoughts sometimes hover about me; but they spring from Custom and Education. I was brought up a Christian, and imbued with all the Principles of that Persuasion; I suck'd in from the Cradle those frightful Notions of Judgment and Hell; and Time has not been able to wear out those dismal Ideas: The first Tincture sticks close, and the Errors of Youth are seldom forgotten: But others who have had the good Fortune to meet with a more free Education, laugh at the Apparitions of those childish Bugbears, first created by Nurses, and then kept up by Fancy.

Euseb. These dreadful Spectres neither owe their Being to Education, Nurses, nor Fancy; they are very real Things: Nature has stamp'd the Belief of them in our Soul, nor is Atheism able to deface them: These Sparks who have not lain under their Discipline, who have ranged about the Island from their Youth, like the barbarous *Brasilians* in the Wilderness of *America*, or wild Asses on the Mountains, without Restraint, without Instruction, may hector Conscience, but cannot gag it: In spite of Debauchery, it will sometimes upbraid, it will throw Crimes before their Faces, and muster up all the Forces of Guilt and Punishment to torment them.

Tell an Atheist, you have a Demonstration against the Being of a God, the bare Proposal quickens him; it pours into him a new Supply of Vigour and Activity; it sweetens his Nature, and throws off the misty Vapours of Spleen and Melancholy: Pray, why such Joy at the very Apprehension of no God? Is it so welcome

News to hear that he must drop into nothing? And take leave of Existence when he bids adieu to Life? No, certainly: But Atheists know, if there be a God, they must once appear at his Tribunal, and they have no Inclination to put the Issue of their Cause upon the Justice of his Sentence. Now, why should they fear to be condemn'd, unless they know they have done ill? And how can they dread Punishment without trembling at the Crime? Who live up to the Precepts of Christianity fear no future Evil, because they act none here; they apprehend no Punishment, because they deserve none. Such a Security is above Price, it exceeds the sparkling Diadems of the *Cæsars*, and all the brutish Pleasures of the Atheists. 'Tis above the Value of Gold or Diamonds, and can only be purchased by Virtue.

Besides, though we cast the other World out of the Question, Chastity, Modesty, and Temperance are honourable Qualifications; they draw Esteem, Respect, and Veneration from the most vicious; for all esteem Virtue, though they will not go to the Charge of the Purchase: Now, though we should come short of Heaven, 'tis some Satisfaction to think that at least we may leave a worthy Memory to After-ages; that our Virtue may stand upon Record to the last Moment of Time, and that our Names will not sleep by us in the Grave. *Epicurus* felt not the Fits of Stone or Gout, when he meditated on the Applause Posterity would give his Writings: This imaginary Pleasure drowned his real Pains, and made him enjoy a Paradise in Torments: The Violence of the Transport either mortify'd his Sense, or inspirited his Mind. *Diogenes* preferred Glory before scandalous Delights, and the very Appearance of Virtue before Libertinism: He thought it worth his while to tie himself up to hard Usage, to silence the Clamours of Passions, and to leave behind him glorious Instances of Temperance and Moderation; that he might make a Figure in Annals, and raise the Fame of his Tub higher than the Trophies of *Miltiades*: And indeed there is a vast Difference between the Delights of Sense, and those of the Mind; those depend on various

rious Circumstances, and must touch the Organ to please it: Perfumes in *Arabia* cannot affect my Nose, nor a Ragous in *Japan* regale my Palate; but the Pleasures of the Mind move in a larger Compass; they act at Distance, and are neither confin'd to Place, nor Situation: By a certain Spell of natural Magic, it raises up past Pleasures, and feasts itself with Futurities; I can please myself with a Thing that is past, and frame entertaining Thoughts of what is to come: And this Privilege good Men possess; they perceive a present Satisfaction, that they have secured their Memory from Obloquy and Detraction; and that when they expire, their Actions will stand up in Defence of their Integrity: If we throw these two Advantages in the Balance, our Condition will not be worse than yours; we shall at least go off the Stage like wise Men, and you will jump into nothing like Fools. But tho' we grant Atheists and Latitudinarians lead more pleasant Lives than Christians, this cannot prejudice our Conduct; for still it is true, that all is little, superficial, and inconsiderable, that must end. Wherefore, to conclude; if it be true, *That when two uncertain Propositions lie before me, I am obliged by the Laws of Prudence to choose that which will turn to my Advantage, if true, and cannot prejudice me, if it chance to be false;* you must confess, that tho' we are mistaken in our Success, we are not in our Choice; and that we are rather unfortunate, than imprudent.

Theom. Well, suppose all this true; I am not one Step nearer my Conversion than before.

Euseb. That is very strange. I have drawn out a Map of your Mistakes; I have balanced your Hopes with your Fears, your Hazard with your Gain; I have made it clear to Evidence, that your Conduct passes Madness and Extravagance: Is not this sufficient to persuade you to alter it? Has Folly so violent Attractives; or Frenzy such unconquerable Charms? Is it better to burn eternally for a Mistake, than go to the Charge of correcting it?

Theom. Believe me, *Eusebius*, I am not dotingly fond of Errors that cost so dear: I would willingly cast them

off, were it in my Power ; but you know, that to serve God with a Doubt of his Being, is no less criminal, than to deny him : Now I cannot stretch my Faith to Firmness or Certitude ; I must waver on Doubts, and float on Suspicions ; for my Understanding is not at Command, it lies not under the Discipline of the Will ; Evidence alone has the Power to bend it : I confess I want Evidence, and if you'll help me to a handsome Dose, I'll return the Favour with Gratitude.

Euseb. Were you not educated in Christianity ?

Theom. I was.

Euseb. Did you not then believe the Existence of a God, and all the high Mysteries of Christianity without Doubts or Fears ?

Theom. I did.

Euseb. When you grew in Years, did you never make an Enquiry into Religion ? Did you not take the Pains to inform yourself why you believed, as well as what you believed ? Did you take all upon Trust ? And owe your Faith to the Font alone, or to the Climate ?

Theom. I passed a great Part of my Life in Retirement ; and made Reading both my Employment and Pleasure ; but especially I levelled my Study at those things that were rather profitable than diverting ; and contributed more to my future Happiness, than my present Satisfaction. Among these, I thought then, that Religion took the first Place ; and in this View I fell upon Polemics with Eagerness, and continued some time with a never-interrupted Application : My Progress answered my Expectation ; I fancied I could defend my Religion against all Opponents, and convince any Man, if it were not evidently true, that it was at least evidently credible : To be plain, I never doubted of any Article, and always suspected his Judgment or Morals that did.

Euseb. Perchance those Motives have given your Memory the Slip, perchance Time and little Reflection has sullied their Lustre, and impaired the Force of their Activity.

Theom.

Theom. No, I have them all before me: But, methinks, they have another Face; they want their former Briskness and Vigour; they strike but faintly on the Brain; and though they move the Understanding, they cannot settle it: Their Evidence is sunk so low, that it scarce holds up to Probability.

Euseb. Upon Examen and second Thoughts, have you discovered Sophistry? Have they failed under Examen, or shrunk under a due Trial of Logic?

Theom. Indeed I never put them on the Rack, nor brought them to the Test of Reason; but I have read in modern Authors such home Arguments against the Being of a God, that it is impossible there should be any such Thing.

Euseb. Hold, *Theomachus*, you take Things by the false Handle, and begin at the wrong End. You had Proofs for the Being of a God, for the Truth of Christian Religion, that flashed Conviction so strongly, that they could not be resisted with Prudence: Now, in turning over Atheistical Neoterics, you stumble upon some Exceptions: One cannot reconcile God's Justice with his Mercy; this seems to fall foul upon that: Another can neither look back to the first Moment of his Eternity, nor grasp his Immenfity, nor comprehend his Immutability: A third is out of Conceit with his Government: Were there a God, says he, this would happen, and that would not; the whole Management of the World argues Chance, rather than Wisdom, and wants either Forecaſt or Power; hence they conclude, 'tis impossible there ſhould be a God; therefore there is none: Blind Worms! who are overpowered with the Beams of a Planet, and dare fix their Eyes upon the Sun; they know not themſelves, and yet would comprehend their Maker; Alas! there is nothing ſo mean, but has ſomewhat above us. We fall under the Weight of a Straw, and are not able to diſſect a Fly, or to anatomize a Glow-worm. Could I comprehend God, I would ſcorn to adore him: The very Notion of an infinite Being, implies Obscurity; and Reason tells me, that an Understanding confined to Limits, can never take a full View of a Thing that has none. Look

you, Sir, you must not turn your Back to plain Truths, because you cannot answer some untoward Questions about them. Though you *subjoin* a thousand Objections, their Evidence will not be allowed of in the Court of Reason, against positive Demonstrations; for we seldom meet with any thing so manifest, that does not put Reason to a puzzle on some Occasions. *Zeno* argued himself out of the Existence of Motion, as you have run yourself out of the Belief of a Deity. *Motion*, says he, *is impossible, therefore there is no such thing*: But his Speculation was not receivable against clear matter of Fact, and *Diogenes* would not dispute, but walked him out of his Error. We lay before you a hundred Arguments, that prove the Existence of a God; you neither discover Weakness in the Principles, nor Error in the Conclusion; but very fairly step over them, and fall upon God's Attributes: You risle his Conduct, and canvas his Proceeding; and then, because your purblind Reason is put to a *Nonplus*, and baffled in the Inquiry, you conclude his *Essence is impossible*. Possibilities would be drawn up in a narrow Compass, if all things were impossible that confound our Understanding: Follow my Advice, Gentlemen, reform your Manners if you intend to believe.

Theom. Had I Faith, Virtue would follow; but how can I mortify Appetite, when I have no Assurance either of Reward or punishment?

Euseb. Quite contrary; bid farewell to your Crimes, and then you will have no Difficulty to believe; whilst 'tis your Interest there should be no God, that Christianity should be an Imposture, you will believe neither; for Interest sways our Judgment, as well as it commands our Actions, and Demonstration itself is less persuasive; 'Tis an Error to think our Will has no Jurisdiction over our Reason; it exercises its Tyranny every Day over that noble Faculty; it treats it like a Slave, rather than a Princess, and Atheists commit Rapes upon their Reason, as well as upon the Sex: Do you not believe you were lawfully begotten?

Theom. I do.

Euseb. And yet you have only your Mother's Word for it; but should she declare the contrary, I suspect you would

would not pay the same Deference to her Authority : Now, why do you believe her in one Case with so much Easiness ? Why do you disbelieve her in the other ? I suppose her *Negatives* are not less credible than her *Affirmatives* ; and that she deserves Belief when she denies as well as when she affirms. Here is the Difference ; 'tis your Interest to be lawfully begotten, and to be thought so : On this Account you enter upon your Father's Estate, and his Titles ; but then to come in at the Back-door is a mortifying Disadvantage ; it cuts off the Right to Succession, and besides throws an Asperision on your Person : Now, though the Motives in both Cases are the same, the Will biased by Interest, rides the Understanding, and forces it to assent to the first, and to dissent from the second : If you shake off ill Habits, if you walk within the Bounds of Moderation and Temperance, and confine your Thoughts and Actions to what is lawful, you will presently look upon God, and Religion, as Things advantageous to you ; because one promises Rewards, and the other will pay them ; and then prudential Motives, by the Power of the Will, can easily draw, and fix the Understanding in the Belief of Truths you now boggle at ; but if you persevere in Lewdness, and make over your Heart to Licentiousness ; if you dare not look another World in the Face, nor take a Survey of Hell without almost feeling the Pains ; you will never firmly believe there is a God, nor frame any tolerable Notion of Religion ; for a stable and settled Persuasion of those Things, runs so contrary to your present Interest, that the Will in spite of Evidence itself, will fool the Understanding ; and either withdraw its Attention from the Consideration of the Argument, or by some sly Trick of *Legerdemain* delude it : No Man in the World ever denied a God before he feared him ; he first deserved Damnation, and then thrust Justice out of Being : And so, *Eudoxus*, I fancy you quarrell'd with the Morals of Christianity, before you fell out with the *Creed* ; and all Religions then only began to please you, when Restraint became cumbersome. However, *Theomachus*, in our following Conference I will attack your Understanding ; and I

hope to propose so strong Arguments, as will be able to fix it in the Belief of a God.

In the mean time dismiss Pride, and turn off Prejudice; this blinds Reason, and that overlooks it; the one will not see Truth, nor the other stoop to embrace it: You must not search after Truth as if you feared to find it; such Pursuits are nothing but Ceremony and Grimace, they are Symptoms both of Folly and Obstinacy, and infallible Marks that you have some sinister Design, either to put a Cheat upon yourself, or to cast Scorn and Contempt upon your Adversary. Those Arguments I shall propose, examine in God's Name; dissect the whole Discourse, weigh the Principles, measure the Inferences by all the Rules of Mood and Figure: But then fall not upon *Criticism*, as if your whole Business were to find Faults, not Truths; to quarrel with them, not to assent: Suppose them not counterfeit, before you have brought them to the Touch-stone: Again, pray remember there is a great Difference between Words, and a good Solution: To return an Answer, is not to enervate a Proof; we may talk much, without talking to the Purpose; and hover about a Question, without coming up to the Point: And as you must take care not to be too great in your own Opinion, so others must not be too little: For Men scorn to learn of those they condemn: And besides, the least Intelligence from such a Quarter will be thought apocryphal: For we measure the Force of Arguments by the Abilities of the Proposer, and always presume they cannot rise above his Height that made them; so that if we under-rate an Adversary, we shall by a necessary Consequence despise his Reasons: For a small Prepossession creates ill Notions, and these bias the Judgment, and give a wrong Turn to the Scale.

But above all things, implore the Succour of that great Being, whose Existence you doubt of: Tell him you are in quest of his Existence, not only to know his Perfections, but to adore his Majesty, to love his Goodness, and to sue for Mercy. Desire him with Tears and Sighs, to dispel those Mists that darken the Under-

derstanding and to dash in Pieces those Chains of Sensuality that fetter the Will ; that you may be so fortunate as to see the Truth of his Being, and so courageous as to embrace it ; for the Activity of a Cause answers the Disposition of the Subject : All the Light in Nature will make no Impression on a disordered Eye : Fire may consume a Member struck with the Palsy, but cannot heat it into Sensation ; and Demonstration may shine upon the Understanding, but this will remain in Darkness, and grope in Obscurity, unless the Will be put in Order, and the Veils of Prejudice, Pride, and Licentiousness be removed : Now this is the proper Business of Grace, which God will send to your Assistance, if you ask it with Patience and Sincerity : But if you will live on your own Fund, if you will engage with a Resolution not to yield, or dispute merely to overcome ; you will live an Infidel, and die a Reprobate : All Arguments will only serve to harden your Heart, to inflame your Guilt, and heighten your Obstinacy.

DIALOGUE VIII.

Eudoxus is not satisfied with Theomachus's Answers.

AFTER some Civilities, *Eusebius* took leave of his Adversaries, and *Theomachus* conducted him to his Coach ; he promised to appear the next Day, and carry on the Conversation. In the mean time, *Eudoxus* found himself in some Disorder above Stairs : This Conference had battered his Confidence, awaked his Conscience, and alarmed his Fears : He had only enlarged his Belief to make room for Debauchery, and would needs save all Men not to damn himself : Restraint was his best Argument against the Necessity of Christian Religion for Salvation, and nothing drew him into such a Latitude of Belief, but an uncontrouled Liberty of acting. But when he heard from *Eusebius* the Danger he run, and the Hazard he exposed himself

self to; he found his Blood in a Ferment, and all the Faculties of his Soul in an Uproar: He walked about the Room in such a musing Posture, that *Theomachus*, now returned, could not tell what to make of this mute Scene: His Motion represented a Farce, his Looks a Tragedy, and both seemed extraordinary amazing. What, said *Theomachus*, are you wrapped in an Extasy, and fallen over Head and Ears into Speculation? What turned Philosopher *ex tempore*? Your Face has no metaphysical Turn, lay down the Disguise, and put on your Shape, you make an odd Figure in Masquerade.

Eudox. Is Seriousness so unbecoming? I am sorry to hear Gravity sits so unhandsomely upon me, and that I cannot put on a thinking Countenance, without acting the Comedian: However, I hope you will excuse me; your Conference has given me some Reason to look demurely.

Theom. With all my Heart, upon Condition you will not turn thinking into a Practice; for, I tell you again, a stoical Comportment agrees ill with your Constitution, and a contemplative Humour will sour the Blood, and cast you into Fits of the Hypochondry. Methinks I can read the Subject of our Meditation on your Face: I have travelled far in Physiognomy, and have drawn up a Map of that Country: In fine, Sir, the Aspect is fitted up for Conversation, as well as the Tongue; and, like the *Spartans*, comprehends much in a little; it explains a Man's Mind more clear than one can speak it: You are now anvilling out some pretty Revenge against *Eusebius*, and indeed he deserves a Mortification for his Sophistry: He talks with such a magisterial Confidence, as if he vented nothing but Evidence: He is a kind of a spiritual Hector, and banters People into Subjection and Slavery; he has an imposing Air, and varnishes his Reason with such Assurance, that unthinking Gentlemen mistake one for the other: But you saw how I teased him.

Eudox. I cannot tell what Judgment you frame of this Morning's Contest, but I counsel you not to crow or cry *Victoria*; let it pass for a drawn Battle; he may other-

otherwise think of the Press, and if the Action takes Air, and appears in View, perchance the Public may pronounce against you. We are often fond of our own Exploits, and easily turn the Advantages upon ourselves; whereas, God knows, impartial Readers may give it to our Adversaries, and lay Dishonour at our Doors. I must own, I wish you had done your Part better, or that *Eusebius* had done his worse: I find my Interior in a Flame; I feel an unknown War in my Breast; your Conversation has raised it; my Fears are enlivened, and though I am not in Hell, methinks I deserve it.

Theom. Certainly you rave, you have a feverish Dis-temper upon you, and the malign Humour has seized upon the Brain: I never saw a Man before, sound under an Argument, or discoursed into a *Calenture*: You take Apprehensions for Things, and turn a good Nature into an Executioner: Your Troubles are but Dregs of Education, or airy Spirits that rise from Prejudice; Time will wear 'em out, or Courage will daunt 'em; bear up with Resolution, and you will scare your Frights, and look those dreadful Bugbears out of Countenance.

Eudox. I had rather you would reason 'em out of Countenance: Uncertainty has begot them, and I fancy Certainty would destroy them. Ah *Theomachus*! If there be a God, you are undone; and if Christianity be the only saving Religion, I am undone also.

Theom. Fie, fie, I took you for a Man of Parts; for a Man above Fear, and out of the Reach of Apprehension. I tell you there is no God, and by consequence that Christianity is nothing but pure Mummery and Imposture: 'Tis a poetical Engine, framed by crafty Statesmen to heave Men into their Duty.

Eudox. But did you not confess to *Eusebius*, that you were certain of neither?

Theom. Prithce ask no Questions: Let us take a Turn to the *Blue Posts*: *Canary* clears more Controversies in an Hour, than Disputes in an Age: A Glass of good Wine carries off a Doubt in a trice, and I have found by Experience that Fears are sooner drank, than reasoned away.

Eudox.

Eudox. The present Business is too serious to be debated in a Tavern; and I had rather argue, than laugh with you. If I comprehend *Eusebius* right, we are in ill Circumstances: For though it happen that we are nothing in the next World, we are without peradventure Fools in this. For, look you, Sir, both our Tenets are very uncertain, and by legal Inference may be false; if they are, what will become of us? Can any Creature sink into a more desperate Misfortune, than we shall certainly meet with? Can we lose more than by forfeiting all? Or can we suffer more, than when we fry in Flames for an Eternity? I confess this Eternity strikes a Damp through every Joint: I dare not play with Thunder, nor stand the Stroke of the Omnipotent. On the other side, though the other Tenets prove true, what are we the better? *First*, Those Pleasures we pretend to, are as uncertain, as that *Hell* we now ridicule, as that *Heaven* we burlesque. *Secondly*, Suppose they were most certain, they are not able to render us happy when we die, nor content, whilst we live; they only serve to engender Diseases, to provoke Conscience, and to prey upon our Estates: They are Things beneath a rational Creature, not worth enjoying, nor even the contending for: Now seeing there is such an immense *Chaos* between our Hopes and our Fears, such a monstrous Disproportion between our Loss and our Gain, how is it possible for Men to swerve more palpably from the common Dictaments of Prudence than we?

Theom. I tell you, the Immortality of the Soul is a mere Flourish of Fancy. 'Tis a *Platonical* Idea formed at *Athens* some Thousands of Years ago, and waisted from beyond Seas in our *Smyrna* Fleet.

Eudox. Could you prove your Assertion, my Fears would be at an End: I would laugh at my present Frights, and sport with those Flames I tremble at. I am not yet cloyed with Liberty, nor surfeited with Mirth; nor am I so besotted with Pleasures of Sense, as to charge through Fire and Brimstone for their sake: But you have granted to *Eusebius*, that this very Point has no more Certainty, than that of the Existence of

^a Deity : So that though you name it a Fable, for aught we know it may be a real Story.

Theom. But do you remember I told *Eusebius*, that a tottering Belief of a God, or of Christianity, would not serve our Turns, though we bridled our Passions, and bound up our Appetite to Penance and Mortification : Now if you have in store an Argument that can convey Conviction, impart it to yourself, and stand to the Belief of Christianity with Resolution : But if you have not, and there be a Hell, a wavering Faith, though waited on by all the Virtues of the most rigid Recluse, conducts you to Destruction, as surely as Debauchery : Of the two, give me therefore a pleasant Life, and a wretched Eternity, rather than a miserable Life, and a miserable Eternity ; for of two Evils I am for the less.

Eudox. I confess I am at a Loss for such an Argument ; yet my Mind gives me, that Industry may make a Discovery, either for the one Side, or for the other ; that is, we may fall upon a *Medium* that will unriddle the Mystery ; and either certainly convince us, that all the Dreads and Terrors of a future State are Fiction and Imposture, or that they are real Things ; for if the Case stood otherwise, I should be tempted to *Timonize*, and clap a Satire upon our whole Species ; I should break its Escutcheon, and throw its Titles of Honour upon *Bears*, *Lions*, and *Tygers* : For certainly Man, with his pompous and magnificent Prerogatives of Reason, would sink below the Level of the vilest Insect ; because his Lot would be Fear, and tormenting Thoughts here, and perchance more tormenting Fire hereafter : Beasts, poor Creatures, neither waste their Spirits with the towering Pretensions of Place, nor Precedency ; nor with the carking Appetite of having, nor with the troublesome Apprehension of losing : Their Care neither looks backward nor forward ; their only Labour is to fence against the present Necessity ; they neither expect any Advantage from the future, nor any Misfortune ; they desire not to be better, nor fear to be worse : They gently glide down the Tide of Nature, and sail down contented with the Current of In-

Inclination: All their Pains and Pleasure expire with their Life, and when their Taper is spent, and burnt within the Socket, they lie down to sleep, and evaporate into *nothing*: But alas! poor Man, is tantalized with pleasant Dreams of a future Felicity, and haunted with frightful Spectres of never-ending Miseries; yet according to your new *Theology*, he is not able to discover whether these Things have any real Being, but an Imagination: What is this but to hang him on the Tenters? But to stretch him on the Torture? And to make his chief Privilege, Reason, subservient to his Torment? There may be a God, say you, a Hell, a Heaven, and one only saving Religion: If these Things are true, and we live as if they were false, we are lost: On the other side, if they were false, and we check Appetite, and conform our Actions to the most rigid Morality, we labour in vain, and take Pains to meet with Disappointment: But then again, if they chance to be true, though we live piously, if we believe not stedfastly, our Business is done: We must pitch our Tents with the *Libertines* and *Atheists*, and keep Company with the unfortunate Fry of the Reprobate. 'Tis true, could we believe without Doubts, a little Mortification of our Passions, some Restraint upon Appetite might secure us; but this, you say, is impossible, because there are not to be found in Nature Motives sufficient to settle our Judgments in a firm Belief, either of a Deity or of Religion; so that in spite of Fate, of Prudence, and Virtue, poor Men must agonize here under all the dreadful Convulsions of Fear; and, if there be a God, under the Weight of his Revenge hereafter: This is a murdering Doctrine, *Theomachus*; and if true, you must conclude, that Nature is a Step-mother to Man, and that God created him in his Fury; that he graced him with Knowledge, to fit him up for Misery: Let us rather say, we may find some Thread, if we take the pains to look about us, to guide us out of this wandering Labyrinth: We may dive into things, till we fall upon Certainty; and discover whether Imposture lies on our Side, or theirs who opposed our Principles: But, Sir, I have,

I fear, trespassed upon your Patience, and perchance good Breeding also: But pray charge my Disorder with these Failings, and take an Excuse for Atonement.

DIALOGUE IX.

Eudoxus, *unsatisfied with the Discourse of Theomachus,*
goes to Eusebius.

EUDOXUS returned to his Lodgings with a heavy Heart: He gave Scope to his Fancy, which, warmed with the Morning Dispute, was become ungovernable: It flew from one dismal Apprehension to another, till at length it wandered into Hell, and drew out all the Terrors of that wretched Region to scare him: The Contemplation of that Place of Torment, of Fire, Darkness, and Despair, squeezed out Tears, Sighs, and Lamentations. Woe be to me, said he, when I die here to Pleasure, if I live hereafter to eternal Pains: This may be my Fate, and certainly will be, if Christianity be the only saving Religion, and there be any Punishment for Infidelity; I say it will be, unless I lay aside both Doubts and Lewdness: This is an Affair of the highest Consequence; it deserves my Solitude, and will reward my Labour with Interest, which way soever it turns. I will therefore think of no other Business, till I have brought this to a happy Conclusion: By the Success of this, I must stand or fall.

The Resolution was taken; but he soon found himself in an unknown Region, without Stars, Map, or Guide to steer his Course by: He pursued Certainty, but knew not in what Part of the Globe it dwelt, or where to address himself for Direction. *First*, He thought to fall upon Reading; for Books being the Product of Time and mature Thoughts, are generally polished; they tell us how far our Understanding can go towards the Discovery of Truth; and leaving Impertinences behind, draw off the Spirits and Essence from the Subject: But then he was at a Puzzle about the
Choice:

Choice: Bad Books, said he, are as contagious as lewd Company; and, what is worse, more frequent and more affecting; for they are set off with luscious Expressions, and with quaint Language, which carries down the poison with Pleasure: Like Ladies, they never appear in Public, but under a gaudy Dress; and care is taken to wash over the Foulness of the Subject with a pleasing Tarnish: A Man may as well learn Chastity in the Stews, Temperance in Taverns, Honesty in *Newgate*, Meekness among Hectors, and the Belief of a God among Atheists, as Christianity among these wretched Pamphlets. An ill Subject well handled, doubles the Danger of reading it; the Mischief rises with the Wit, and infects in Proportion to the Art of the Author. In fine, he was tossed from Resolution to Resolution, without knowing which to resolve on; till at length he reflected of *Eusebius*: 'Tis true, he had no Acquaintance with the *Gentleman*, but being taken with his Morning's Discourse, he was satisfied of his Capacity, and judged favourably of his Probity. These Considerations made him break through all Difficulties, and the present Aches of his Mind, added Wings to the Desire of finding a Lenitive.

He went therefore out of hand to *Eusebius's* Lodgings, and laid open the State of his Interior; he conjured him by all that is sacred to lend his Assistance; and, if possible, to cure that Wound himself had made: He spoke with a Vehemency that easily persuaded *Eusebius* he was in earnest; and his Suit was too just to receive a Denial.

Sir, said *Eusebius*, you have addressed yourself to a Person, that is perchance less able than willing to assist you: I assure you of my Readiness, the Issue must answer for my Ability. I am glad (pardon the Expression) of your Distemper: When we feel the Disease, there is Hopes of a Cure; but when we have no Sense of our Condition, 'tis time to think of a Coffin. Neither spurn nor kick at Providence for this painful Usage: The Operation, no doubt, is sharp, but withal necessary; Health of the Body is not recovered without Pain; an Imposthume calls for a Lance, and Oppletion for unpalatable Evacuatories. The same Methods are applicable

cable to the Diseases of the Soul: Whilst Conscience suffers Debauchery without Murmur, without Complaint; whilst we enjoy a profound Peace within us, in the midst of Crimes, as well as of Innocence, we find no Inclination to reform: That false Tranquility lulls us asleep, it keeps serious Reflections at a Distance, and persuades our foolish Credulity, that no Danger threatens us, because we apprehend none: But when Offences sit uneasy upon us, when Pleasures gall us, when Infidelity becomes suspected, and Lewdness itself troublesome; we begin to survey our Conduct, to compare the present with the future, to face our Hopes with our Fears, and the Delights of this Life with the Torments of the other: And when we discover those gross Illusions we lie under, a little Struggling, with the Help of God's Grace, will break through all Impediments which interpose between us and our Duty: Take therefore this Anguish of Mind as a Pledge of God's Kindness, and of your future Felicity; he strikes in his Mercy, as well as in his Justice; he heals when he wounds, and spares when he punishes: Never defer the Search of Truth, nor faulter till you have found it: Slackness in a Point of this Importance is always dangerous, and sometimes mortal: When we refuse God's kind Invitation, he often chastises our Incivilities in *Flagranti*, and scarce leaves a Moment between the Affront and the Revenge. When I was some Years ago in *Flanders*, an Officer of my Acquaintance gave me a Visit; he was one of those who make no Distinction between Religion and Faction; who jest at Faith, and spend their Lives in its Service: He could no more believe that Church true he fought for, than that he fought against: He ridiculed the one, and contemned the other; he treated Morality ill in his Discourse, but worse in Practice, I thought a little Warmth and Expostulation were justifiable on such an Occasion, and so I took him up roundly; I drew out in lively Colours the Horror of his Life, the Unwarrantableness of his Proceeding, and the Severity of those Pains God had prepared for Libertines in the next World; together with the Curses that would fall upon his Head in this: He took leave of me, and retired

retired to his Inn, but after Dinner he returned : I have often, said he, received Proofs of your Kindness, but never greater than this Morning : I have looked into myself since I saw you, and confess my Case would be desperate, had I less than an infinite Mercy to confide in : Some urgent Business calls me to my Garrison ; but next Week I will return, and advise with you about the grand Affair of my Salvation. This is a Call from God, answer'd I, and perchance it may be the last : The Campaign draws near ; and when once you have taken the Field, you will neither be Master of your Time, nor your Life ; your Employment challenges *that*, and a Bullet may dispose of *this* before you are aware.

I am sensible, replied the Gentleman, of my Case, and of the Danger ; and nothing shall alter my Resolution ; and so he departed. He kept his Word, and within ten Days returned ; he passed by my Lodgings, and told me he would not fail after Dinner to wait upon me, and hoped to bring his Business to a happy Conclusion. Permit me, Sir, said I, to attend you at your Inn : 'Tis much more easy to fall into Company than to disengage yourself : Men of your Calling had rather storm a Half-moon than assail Custom, or attack Ceremony : But he would not hear of my Proposition ; he left the Company, and was on his way, when unfortunately he met with a Friend, who invited him to a Bottle of *Champaigne* : He would not accept of the Invitation ; but the other would not be denied : And so at length away they marched together. One Bottle drew on another, and their Debauch ended with the Night : In the mean time, an Express calls him to his Regiment : The *French* have taken the Field, and all must march to watch their Motions : He returns home in Post ; he goes to the Camp, and shortly after loses his Life at *Steenkirk* : We may truly say this poor Gentleman was near Heaven ; but God send the unhappy Recounter of a Friend did not put him out of the way ! He was invited to Repentance, he made a fair Advance ; and, I may say, the Business was almost finished, because he seriously resolved to conclude it. But a Bottle
of

of *Champaigne* put in a Demur : It suspended the Execution ; and then the sudden March of the Troops broke off the Negotiation. He went to the Field a *Libertine*, and in all Probability died one. As God touched his Heart, so he has softened yours : Pray, Sir, let not Negligence misuse the Favour, nor turn it into a Curse : Let it stand up for you at God's Tribunal, as a Witness of Gratitude, not of Obstinacy. I counsel you for some Days to withdraw into a Place of Retirement : Visits will distract you, and may stifle your pious Resolution, if your Design takes Air. If your Companions learn you are going into another Interest, they will raise a hundred Batteries against your Constancy ; and though you come off with Victory, you will not get clear of their Temptations without Danger : I will willingly wait upon you into the Country, if you can pitch upon a convenient Place.

Eudox. You will infinitely oblige me : My House is but four Miles off ; and, if you please, we will take Coach this Evening.

Euseb. I am content, but I must excuse my Departure to *Theomachus*, otherwise he may send *Hue and Cry* after me, and *Si quis* me in the next *Gazette*.

He sent him a Letter to let him know that a Business of Importance required his Presence in the Country ; that he would dispatch it with convenient Speed, and that the same Moment his Hands were rid of that Trouble, he would return to prosecute the Conference. *Theomachus* answer'd he was his own Master ; that he might take his Time, and that he would expect his Return with Pleasure : They immediately took Coach, and arrived at *Eudoxus's* House.

DIALOGUE X.

Eudoxus retires with Eusebius into the Country, where they meet with Ariovistus, a high-flown Latitudinarian.

EUDOXUS's Mother received her Son with Tenderness: She was a Lady of a Piety above the common; she loved her Son, but could not dissemble his Vices: She often admonished him of the Danger he exposed his Soul to, and sometimes mingled Tears with gentle Reproofs. But his Time was not yet come, and all her Admonitions only served to heighten his Obduracy: Yet she gave not over; she implored God's Assistance in private, and beseeched his Mercy to strike out of this Rock some Tears of Repentance; to recal this Prodigal, who had embezzled all his Treasures of Grace, and pawn'd his Religion to Prostitutes: Her Friends admired her Charity, and pitied it. Once a *Divine* assured her, that a Child of Tears would never perish: She took the Words for an Oracle, and fancied he spoke by Inspiration: Though her Son's Profaneness touch'd her to the quick, the Hopes of his Conversion kept her in heart; and the more he ran from Piety, the more she practis'd it.

When *Eudoxus* arrived, she read some Change in his Face; his Behaviour was more grave, his Looks more sober, and all his Carriage breathed an Air of Modesty. At first she suspected the Dice had run cross, and that the Cause of his Melancholy lay in the Pocket: Then she feared he was hammering out some amorous Intrigue, or lay under the Mortification of a criminal Disappointment. But *Eudoxus* soon dissipated her Suspicions, by telling the Cause of his unexpected Arrival. She was overjoy'd at the News, and almost sunk under the Excess: She gave *Eusebius* a thousand Thanks, and styled him her Son's good Angel. They were sitting down to Supper, when in comes *Ariovistus*, with another Gentleman. The Lady was surpris'd at the Arrival

rival of so unexpected a Guest; his very Sight drew Blood to her Face, and though she was Mistress of her Words and Actions, she could not command her Resentment. She feared lest this importune Visit might nip her Son's Resolutions, and dash in Pieces the Hope she had of his Conversion. However, she forgot not Civility in the very Heat of her Disturbance, and screen'd off her Concern with a hearty Welcome.

But after Supper she took *Eusebius* aside, and exposed her Fears with all the Energy of Tears and Passion. Sir, said she, God send your Charity meet with Success: I suspect *Ariovistus* cloaks some ill Design under the specious Outside of a Visit, and that another Errand brought him here besides mere Civility: His Morals run even with his Religion; he believes what flatters Pride, and acts whatever fawns upon Sense; he goes upon one Principle, which is to stick at nothing that sides with Interest, or gratifies Appetites. This Man first furnished *Eudoxus* with corrupt Maxims, and *Theomachus* taught him the Application. In fine, both have contributed to his Destruction, and my Misfortune.

Eusebius desired her not to take the Alarm. I will find Occasion, said he, to engage *Ariovistus* in a Dispute, I doubt not of the Success: The Overthrow of the Master may work upon the Scholar. He may yield to those Reasons *Ariovistus* I am sure will not be able to resist. The next Morning, when they sat together in the Parlour, Chance gave the Cue to a hot Debate, that covered *Ariovistus* with Confusion, and *Eusebius* with Glory.

DIALOGUE XI.

God does neither command, nor permit us to conform to the Religion of the Country where we live.

THE Post brought *Eudoxus* a News Letter from London, which gave an Account of new Laws enacted against Papists.

Ariov. This Act is worthy of that great Assembly, I have nothing against the Proceedings, but that it's too moderate, and indulging: Besides, methinks it should have reach'd all Dissenters; for all being guilty of Obstinacy, none should be exempt from Punishment.

Euseb. How! too indulging! What will you call severe? Papists are disseized of their Birthright, stript of Property, and exposed to the Insolence of villainous Informers and Catch-polls; and after all, you complain of Moderation. Mistake me not, Sir, I neither arraign the Wisdom nor the Justice of the *Parliament*: That august Body may have Reasons unknown to us: But I disapprove your persecuting Humour: Dissenters are our Fellow-subjects; the Relation deserves Tenderness, and calls for some Compassion: It's Barbarity to outrage a *Felon* at the Bar, or to insult over a condemned Wretch at *Tyburn*, much more over Dissenters; who, for aught we know, have no other Crime, but their Religion.

Ariov. Let them conform, and they shall enjoy the Protection of the Government, and the Liberty of *Englishmen*; but if they take the Pet, and stray from the established Worship of the Realm, the Commonwealth must take notice of their Prevarication, and punish it: And as those who suffer for the Breach of Laws die deservedly; so they who lay down their Lives for any Religion outlawed by the Commonwealth, are Malefactors, not Martyrs: They only pass through one Punishment into another: Thousands, *Eusebius*, are canonized here on Earth, that will never be fainted in Heaven.

Ensch. Hold, Sir, this Doctrine should be bleach'd; it's so monstrously foul, there is no enduring it: It should pass a *Quarantine* in some *Lazaretta*; methinks it smells rank of Infection. Blasphemy sits on every Syllable: What think you? Did St. *Laurence* and St. *Stephen* die like Criminals? Are not their Names registered in the Book of Life, as well as in the Martyrologue? Yet they died for a Religion, condemned by the supreme Authority of *Rome* and *Jury*. Sir, I would have you dispute this Point at the *Old-Baily*. Blasphemy is punish'd with Fire in this World, as well as in the next.

Ariov. Heat and Invective rather fret an Adversary, than convince him: More Reason and less Passion, are proper for a Man of your Age and Character: You are on the Decay, Sir; your Deportment should be as cold as your Blood, and your Passions as grey as your Head. I say, God made Man for Commerce, we cannot live on our own Fund; we must barter with our Neighbours; and this foreign Correspondence is requisite to furnish out Happiness: A sociable Life is impracticable, (I would say impossible) unless Inferiors lie under an indispensable Obligation of obeying, and Superiors have an uncontrollable Power to ordain all those things that are necessary to support and conserve Society.

Now, what can be more necessary than Union, and Harmony of Opinions? This cements all the Parts, and moulds them into one great Body: It inspirits them to Action in their design'd Station: It combines their Interest, and by consequence their Endeavours: But when their Minds are divided, their Interests are separated, and then they club into Faction; and whilst each Cabal drives at private Ends, the whole Fabric of the Government first totters, and then falls into Confusion. But of all Divisions, those that spring from Differences in Religion have ever proved the most fatal. Zeal has opened more Veins than Cruelty, and laid waste more Provinces than Ambition; it has rised those very Places Avarice itself left untouched, and set on fire those religious Edifices Impiety revered: It has

brought some Princes to the Scaffold, and others to abdicate: In fine, new Seditions break in upon the State with new Religions, and the establish'd Government is always struck at, with the established Church. Pretence of Piety leads the *Van*, but *Sword, Cannon, and Desolation* bring up the *Rear*.

Seeing therefore God commands us to live in Society, he has impowered the chief Magistrate, with a full Commission to enact those Laws that are requisite for the furthering this great Design: Now nothing under Heaven can be more necessary, than a power to establish Religion, therefore God has entrusted every supreme Magistrate with that Power; whence it follows, that every Religion settled by Law, binds all those who live under the Protection of that State; and by consequence I dare not excuse any *Dissenter* from Treason, both against the Common-wealth and God.

In a Word, we must conform our Belief to that of the Country where we live; nor can any Pretence of Conscience or Revelation exempt us from the Obligation: Hence, I say, that *Stephen* the Deacon lost his Life at *Jerusalem*, as fairly as *Stephen* the Joiner at *Oxford*: They both fell by the Law, and therefore justly. Death makes not a Martyr, but the Cause; this alone distinguishes the Innocent from the Guilty.

Euseb. Bless me! where are we? The Jews tore their Garments, when they heard Blasphemies, but Christians turn it into Entertainment; certainly nothing but Damnation is able to force out such flaming Expressions: Your Discourse is too rank to undergo a Dissection; it carries with it a Complication of Crimes, that won't bear the very naming: Like flagitious Malefactors, they infect on the Hurdle, and kill at their Execution: It is almost safer to dissemble, than to arraign them; and they are taught, whilst they are re-proved: But seeing you have hung Poison among the Audience, I'll venture to present them an Antidote. You say, *St. Stephen* died a Rebel, no Martyr; that he fell by Law, and consequently by the Hands of Justice: But this hellish Logic argues our blessed Saviour into Rebellion, and stigmatizes him for a convicted Conspirator;

spirator; for certainly he died by Command of the Magistrate: Innovation in Matters of Religion made up one part of the Charge against him, and Treason the other, I suppose this horrid Insolence lay out of Sight; for Gentlemen of your Persuasion are short-sighted, and are so taken up with Principles, that they overlook Illations: Remember, Sir, we live under a pious Princess, and a reforming Parliament; so that I do not despair within some Days to hear, that severe Laws are past against those that blaspheme God, as well as against those that serve him.

Ariovistus began an Apology, but *Eusebius* refused to hear it. Sir, said he, the Text is too plain to need a Comment, and too horrid to deserve one: To excuse Blasphemy, is but a Hair's breadth from defending it: The very hearing of the Word abates the Horror of the Crime; for no Offences are less detested, than those that are often spoken of: Besides, I have only glanced at an Inference; the Principle is more flagitious, and therefore must be brought to the Bar. You say God commands us to conform to the Religion of the Country where we live; and that to profess any other, or to believe nothing, is equally criminal.

Ariov. I say so.

Euseb. Is your Assertion universal?

Ariov. It takes in all Religions; it reaches all Nations, as well as all Ages.

Euseb. God therefore commands me, when I am in England, to deny *Transubstantiation*, *Prayers for the Dead*, *Seven Sacraments*, &c. But if Business calls me to *Paris*, *Rome*, or *Madrid*, he commands me to steer about, and believe them: In *Christendom* I must believe Christ is God; but if a brisk Gale wafts me over into *Asia*, I must deny it: At *Constantinople* I must swear there is one God. and that *Mahomet* is his Prophet; but at my return into the West, I must change my Tune, I must swear the Prophet into an Impostor, and his Revelations into Forgery: But if I steer towards the North, and set up in *Lapland*, then I must bow to a red Cloth, and pour forth my Orisons to *Madam Puss*: Again, if I double the *Cape*, and put in at *Cochin*, I must fall prostrate before an *Ape's* Grinder.

Ariov. Well, and what harm in all this?

Euseb. Why truly, travelling will be expensive: Before we set out, we must provide ourselves with *Alexander Rossé's View of Religions*; we must make a handsome Collection of *Astrolabe's Quadrants*, and *Jacob's Staffs*, to find the Lines of Longitude, and Latitude; for in your Hypothesis, Mathematics must be our Rule of Faith, and Climates the Motives of our Credibility. This is a pretty System, and has the Advantage of Novelty to recommend it: I have often seen Controversies tried by *Scripture*, *Tradition*, and *Reason*: but to compose a Difference by *Logarithms*, *Sines*, and *Tangents*, is extraordinary: The Invention is worthy of your Wit, and of the same Piece with your Piety: In good time you may improve the Discovery, and find out the true Religion, as we do true Guineas, by the *Weight*.

But if in *England* *Transubstantiation* be false, it cannot be true in *France*, *Spain*, and *Italy*; and if in *Europe* our Blessed Saviour be really God, all the Power of the *Grand Seignior* can never turn him into a *meer Man* in *Asia*: In fine, if *Mahomet* be an *Impostor* in the *West*, how can he be a *Prophet* in the *East*? For Truth is no *Trimmer*, it will not stand on both sides of the *Contradiction*.

It is evident therefore that God commands me to believe a Falshood, either in *England*, or beyond Sea; nay, and engages his Authority to persuade me: He threatens Hell, if I refuse, and offers Heaven, if I conform. In *England* I honour him, by swearing *Transubstantiation* is a meer Fiction, the Product of Ignorance, and Spawn of Superstition; but this *Tramontane* Honour carries Damnation with it at *Rome*; here I must swear *Transubstantiation* is a very real Thing, and so fly in the Face of my own Evidence. Perjury therefore in your Religion passes for an Act highly meritorious, *id est*, a scandalous Crime for a most edifying Virtue. What mad Notions do you frame of God? You level him with *Oates*, and fling him below *Bedloe*: You seem to acknowledge a Deity merely to make him capable of Contempt and Infamy.

Ariov.

Ariov. You mistake me, I neither impeach God of Forgery, nor Imposture : I do not question his Veracity, nor squint upon his Sanctity : I only maintain he commands me to be a *Protestant* in *England*, and a *Papist* at *Rome* ; to believe Christ is God in *Queen Anne's Court*, and that he is a meer Man in the *Sultan's* ; but he does not engage his Word for Truth of either Side.

Euseb. And, I suppose, he commands you to profess *Whiggism* in the *Amsterdam Coffee-house*, *id est*, to blend Faction with Religion, and shroud Infidelity under Hypocrisy : For look you, Sir, you cannot possibly believe the Articles of the Church of *Rome true*, without pronouncing those of the Church of *England false* : For these are *Negatives* of the other ; if God commands you to chop Beliefs with the Climate, he commands you to play the Hypocrite on one side of the Water, which is a Crime against the first Principles of Reason, and can no more be commanded by God, than practised by Man : For such a Behaviour is a Burlesque, a Satire on all Religion, and by consequence on the *Author* and *Object* of it.

But again, if God commands me to be a *Protestant* in *England*, and a *Papist* at *Rome* ; a *Turk* in *Asia*, and a *Christian* in *Europe*, he engages his Word for a Falsity ; for the Church of *England* maintains the Articles of her Belief were revealed ; the Church of *Rome* says the same, in Defence of hers ; and the *Mahometan* Congregation lays all its Impostures on Revelation : When therefore God commands you to be a *Protestant*, *Papist*, or *Mussulman*, he commands you to believe he has revealed the particular Tenets of these Sects, and consequently avouches for the Truth of them ; for whatever he reveals, must be true : So that to oblige you to believe, he has revealed such a Point, and to engage his Word for the Truth of it, is one and the same thing. Now the particular Tenets of these Churches cross upon one another, and therefore all cannot possibly be true ; whence it follows that God engages his Authority for a Lye, and pawns his Veracity for a Falshood : You subject his Sanctity to a

Weakness we all blush at, though we all commit it, and even level him with Knights of the Post.

Moreover, if Christ be a *meer Man*, how can God command Christians to adore him? And if he be God, how can he forbid the *Turks, Nestorians, and Arians*, to pay him Homage due to his Divinity? God can no more strip himself of his Sovereignty, than of his Being; he can as soon take a Creature into his Throne, as make over his Title to Adoration: In a Word, either Man can offend, or he cannot; if he cannot, let him bid farewell to all Religions, and take leave of Morality; let him model his Actions by *Epicure*, and his Faith by *Protagoras*: But if he can offend, what clashes more directly with all Laws Natural and Divine, than Idolatry? If this spiritual Incest be innocent, what can be criminal? And if God can command so sacrilegious an Action, what can he forbid?

Ariorius was pinched, he saw himself in the Toils, and knew not how to disengage himself; his Concern flew to his Face, and every Posture shewed Uneasiness, and Anger. Come, Sir, said he at last to *Eusebius* with a forced Smile, I have mistaken my Errand, I came not to dispute, but to be merry; let Arguments give Place to a Bottle; it is more satisfactory to see the Bottom of a Glass, than of a Question, and to drain Bumpers, than Controversies; we have run the first Heat, it is time to rub.

Euseb. You Latitudinarian Gentlemen are strange Creatures, you hector Religion and Piety with such a daring Confidence, when you are out of the reach of an Adversary, that one would swear both Sense and Reason had embraced your Interest; but when you receive a Blow, you retreat to Jest, you parry against Proofs with Railleries, and oppose Laughter to Reason. To be plain, you misplace your Passions, you smile when you should tremble, and laugh when you should cry: Had you any Apprehension of a God, you would dread those Flames, that his eternal Justice has prepared below to burn, not to consume Blasphemies; these hideous Flights of Prophaneness and Impiety would be Pain and Penance to you: You lay such desperate

perate Commands to his Charge, as fit him rather for Contempt than Veneration, and make him more worthy of Horror than Adoration; for if your Divinity be orthodox, he abets Lies, commands Idolatry, and persuades Perjury; and so Man's Vices make up the Roll of his Perfections, and we must revere in him what all human Laws punish in us.

Ariov. You are disposed for a touch of Polemics; but if you are above the Laws of Decency and Breeding, I am not: I resolve not to turn Clown for Company; I have too much Respect for my Lady to be clamorous in her Presence, and think it as genteel to duel, as to dispute before her: Besides, we are upon Theological Niceties, unnecessary to be known by the Learned, and impossible to be understood by the Vulgar.

Sir, said the Lady, let no Ceremony break off the Conference; we stand not here upon Grimace, or Reservedness, and though we did, your Defeat will atone for your Rudeness: To be plain, I am impatient to see your Vanity lashed, your Pride disciplined, and your rhodomontading Genius penanced with Confusion. How often in my House have you not only made a Practice, but a Boast of Profaneness, and defended the Crime, by committing a greater? You have lampooned those Gentlemen that durst stand up in Defence of Religion, and daubed them with the Reproaches of Bigotry and Superstition; you question their Judgments, and dubbed them Fools, who would not swallow down all Religions; and blustered with imposing an Assurance, as if it were as easy to defend Libertinism, as to abet it. Sir, you are in sight of an Adversary, look him in the Face, stand your Ground, and defend your Principles, or condemn them by an *Affidavit*, that your Repentance may be as public as the Scandal: Your Honour is at Stake, and there is no Mean between a Victory and an Overthrow.

This sudden Tempest blown from an unexpected Quarter, soon raised a Tumult in *Ariovistus's* Breast; Shame, Anger, and Revenge broke loose, and fanned his Resentment to such a height, that it almost stifled

his Reason. He rolled a hundred Thoughts in his Head, and almost as many Resolutions, yet he could not fix on any; to retaliate was not only unmanly, but also uncivil; for though a Lady be not below a Man's Anger, she is below his Revenge: To break off the Dispute was dishonourable, and to baffle *Eusebius* difficult; however, at last having balanced his Fears with his Hopes, he concluded his Reputation would suffer less by continuing the Dispute, than flying it: For though *Eusebius* might foil him with Reason, he thought himself superior at Raillery; which oftentimes even Men of Paris mistake for Wit, and receive for Reason. At least he had found upon Experience, that Noise in Disputes stands for Evidence, and that those carry off the Honour of Conquest in the Opinion of the Audience, who speak loudest, not who discourse best: These Considerations swayed him to accept of a second Engagement; wherefore turning himself first to the Lady:

Madam, said he, I thought I owed your Character and Person some Respect, but seeing you are pleased to forego the Debt, I shall supercede the Payment; I perceive Deference is sometimes unacceptable, and Civility clownish. I will therefore for the future take my Liberty, and never stand off in Restraint or Ceremony.

Then addressing himself to *Eusebius*; Sir, continued he, you misunderstand me: I mean not that God commands us to conform to the Religion of the State where we live. No, he permits us only; like the Royal Eagle, he preys on Hearts; these he requires: So that if we love, honour, and obey him, we keep up to the very height of his Commands. He permits all exterior Ceremonies, though vain, superstitious, and wicked; a good Intention sanctifies an ill Action, and the Uprightness of our Hearts compounds for the Errors of our Worship: In fine, Sir, God looks on all the Failures of our Understanding as pure Mistakes, not Crimes; and those he cannot approve, he pities.

Euseb. I understood you before, and apprehend you at present: You draw the Thesis into a less Compass,
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and turn God's Command into a bare Permission; *id est*, I have driven you from one Retrenchment, and you are clapped behind another; but this is no more staple, than the first, and you will be forced to surrender. Tell me, does God permit all Religions?

Arion. All that are, or ever were in the World.

Euseb. All? That Man certainly deserves Damnation, that can find no Religion to his Gouſt: But do no Actions outrage Nature?

Arionistus made a Pause, and ſeemed at a loſs for an Answer; he ſaw what *Eusebius* drove at, and that he only coaſted the main Queſtion, to draw him into an Ambuſcade. Sir, ſaid he, your *Quere* is captious; and though ſome are of Opinion, that Virtue and Vice are rather Names than Things; yet I condeſcend ſo far, as to grant that Murders, Blaſphemies, and Adulteries ſlie at Nature, and are in a very obvious and literal Senſe criminal and opprobrious.

Euseb. God, I ſuppoſe, permits not theſe unnatural Abominations; if he has no Punishments in reſerve for ſuch profligate Offenders, under-rate Tranſgreſſors may expect a Recompence.

Arion. God diſapproves ſuch hideous Enormities as ſhame Nature, and even intrench upon Breeding; they deſerve Hell, and will feel it, unleſs Repentance appeaſe Divine Juſtice.

Euseb. Why then this Permission is no more univerſal, than the Command; for if God's Permission comprehends not Crimes that aſſail Nature, it takes not in thoſe Religions that inſult Nature in the very act of Worſhip. Strike off the Catalogue, the Religion of the *Mexicans*, who to honour their God, broke through all the natural Laws of Juſtice, and Honesty: For they firſt invaded the neighbouring Provinces with Fire and Sword, and then ripped open the Breasts of twenty thouſand Captives upon the ſacrilegious Altars of their barbarous Divinities, and by a bloody Metamorphoſis turned Cruelty into Piety, and worſhipped God by proſanating Nature.

The Superſtition of the *Peruvians* lies open to the ſame Exception: Theſe ſavage Idolaters dy'd the Earth with
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the reeking Gore of human Sacrifices, and polluted their Temples with unnatural Prostitutions; they trained up Youths for that lewd Purpose, and hallowed their most religious Rites with the most flaming Abominations: In a Word, Nature forbids, what their impure Gods commanded, and human Laws purge with Fire the most essential Acts of their Religion.

If we leave *America*, and ship for *Asia*, we shall meet with the same Vices; though the People are more civilized, they are not less brutal. The *Tracians*, *Huns*, and *Phœnicians* worshipped their Deities, by worrying their own Species, and so built their Piety on Murders and Cruelty. In *Africa*, the Superstition of the *Carthaginians* was more formidable than their Arms; and their Priests were more cruel in their Temples, than their Generals in the Field: They lock'd poor Infants in their glowing Statues of *Saturn*, and placed their Devotion rather in the Torment than Death of Innocents. The old *Egyptians* drown'd their Reason in Honour of *Mars*, and then prosecuted their Devotions with Clubs and Swords; and he was judg'd the most zealous, who had the least of a Man, and most of a Butcher.

The *Babylonians* and *Phœnicians* defiled their Temples with Whoredom and Sodomy. Prostitution always preceded Marriage; and those Women who refused to shave their Heads, were doomed to expose their Honour, and to adorn the Temple of *Venus* with the Spoils of their Chastity: So that those infamous Religions branded Honesty with Infamy, they stigmatized Continence, and ennobled Lewdness.

I blush at the very Thought of the Rites of *Venus* the *Corinthian*, where Women were ordained Priests by the most scandalous and outrageous Acts of Lust, and consecrated by Adulteries: They were Strumpets before they could be qualified for the Priesthood, and deserved *Bridewell* to be fit for the Altar. I suppose these Religions come not within the Pale of Permission: For how can God permit those Actions good Men condemn, and Debauchees blush at; that startle Nature, and confound Wickedness? He must take notice of such Enormities, or renounce Sanctity; he must punish them,

or let fall his Claim to Justice: In fine, he must maintain his Character. The Atheist who denies God, is less criminal than he who worships him with Murders and Fornication.

Ariov. God permits not those Religions that affront Nature, and discard the first Principles of Reason: When Temples become Slaughter-houses, and Priests Butchers; when the Stews are consecrated, and Adulteries canonized, it's time to separate from such *Congregations*.

Euseb. You found a Retreat: First God commanded to conform to the Religion of the Country where we dwell; then you turned his Command into a Permission, and now you restrain this: Like the *Parthians* you fight in your Retreat, and place your Safety in your Heels. But this Expedient will not answer Expectation; I have you in view, and will not leave the Chace, till I have either run down your Impiety, or confounded it. But, Sir, suppose a *Montezuma* should threaten Death unless you abjured Christ for *Vitziliputzli*, would not God, on so pressing an Occasion, permit you to embrue your Hands in human Sacrifices?

Ariov. No Man living in a noble way fears Death less than myself; I would come into the World merely to make a handsome *Exit*; yet I would not part with my Life for a Ceremony: My Belief is not untractable, it can bow upon Occasions, and connive at those things it does not approve: What is not impious, is always lawful; and therefore I would rather, upon an Exigency, conform than die. Though I am sure there are *Antipodes*, I would not, like that foolish Bishop, maintain the Truth at the Expence of my Blood; this would be to trifle away Life, and is rather a Demonstration of my Folly, than of the Roundness of the Earth.

Should *Montezuma* command me in his Dominions to abjure Christ, I should reverence his Orders; for the supreme Magistrate's Will is the Law of the Subject: But whether I might in Conscience espouse his Religion, is a Case worthy of some sober Reflections:

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For Life is a tender thing ; Self-preservation has Charms, and the unexperienced Condition of Separation is a very lawful Pretext to stay in the World : To be fired or bastinadoed hence is a painful Operation, and we are not obliged to such a troublesome Removal.

Besides, Life, I conceive, was given us for noble Ends, and therefore we must not part with it out of a Bravado : If we disband, and leave our Colours without our great Master's Leave, we shall pay for our Desertion, and meet with a worse Welcome from an angry God in the next World, than from a barbarous Emperor in this. Seeing therefore I may give my Heart to God, whilst I offer human Sacrifices to the *Mexican* Idol, I may rather conform, than die for Disobedience : For he who forces commits the Sin, if the Action be unlawful, not he who obeys by Compulsion.

The Company startled at this strange Divinity ; Amazement tied their Tongues, and Horror ran through every Joint. At last, It's well, cried *Eusebius*, we have Scripture to appeal to, otherwise we might be puzzled by the Impudence of those, who treat *Goodness* unhand-somely by Practice, and unchristianly by defending their Excesses : Their Manners are so bad, that nothing can be worse but the Wit and Confidence they employ to excuse them. I see, continued *Eusebius*, you measure Man's Perfections downwards, and judge him more reasonable, the less he acts with Reason.

You are a Leveller in Morality, as well as in Religion, and make no Distinction between Vice and Virtue ; or at least with an extatic Turn of the Heart, you transform one into the other : This is Direction of Intention with a Witness. A Man that can juggle the most flagitious Crimes into Piety, must be born under a very unfortunate Star to miscarry. You may dip your Hands in Blood, plunge your Body into the very Sink of Lewdness, and with a safe Conscience make over your Soul to the Devil ; an omnipotent Cast of the Heart, rectifies all, a good Intention atones for a bad one.

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But why did you just now exempt from the general Permission of those Religions, that in the Act of Worship affront Nature? For you may turn your Heart to God every jot as well, when your Life is secure, as when it's endangered; so that if Direction of Intention saves Conscience on some Occasions, it may on all: Do not Murders, Cruelties, and most unnatural Lusts turn upon Nature when my Life lies at stake, as well as when it does not? Do they jar with Reason when I hazard nothing, and fawn upon it when I risk all? Certainly Sins of this black Dye vary not with Circumstances, they change not their Nature as the *Camelian* does his Colour; their Blackness lies in the Complexion, not on the Fancy; they are always the same, *id est*, odious to God, and abominable in the Sight of Men.

You say Life was given us for noble Ends, and therefore must not be flung away, either in a Pet or Bravado? It's true, but then what can Imagination frame more noble, more sublime, than the Defence of God's Honour, and our own Nature? Than to vindicate the just Rights and Prerogatives of Virtue from the illegal Usurpations of Vice? These Enterprizes are worthy of a Man; it's more glorious to die for such a Cause, than to conquer in the Field. When we sacrifice our Lives for him who gave them, our Generosity will be pleaded to Advantage, not only in the next World, but also in this. No Action is truly glorious, that is not virtuous; and therefore your *Cæsars* and *Alexanders*, in spite of all Trophies, are infamous in the Sight of God; their Temerity is laughed at by the Angels, and their Ambition severely punished by the Protector of Orphans, and just Avenger of Pupils: They had nothing great but Pride and Folly; their Glory sprung from Plunder, and their Renown from Slaughter; but if they deserve Praise for ransacking Cities, for overturning Kingdoms, and invading Empires, we may make Panegyrics of Plagues, raise triumphal Arches to Famines, and erect Statues to Hurricanes and Inundations: In a Word, we live merely to serve God; this is our End, and a noble one: Passion, indeed, or Discontent, are
ill.

ill Diseases to die of, but then Libertinism is a dangerous Motive to live: Our Disobedience is no less criminal when we refuse to quit our Post upon Command, than when we abandon it without Order: We are discharged of the Duty of Living, when we must purchase Breath at the Expence of Conscience; and certainly we forfeit Innocence, when we commit, or abet Murders or Adulteries; and by consequence, a Man must part with Life, when we cannot keep it without Treason against Nature, and Rebellion against its Author.

But I suppose the noble End you propose to yourself, is to spin out Life as long as the Thread will reach; to stretch Nature to its utmost, and not to venture one single Pulse, but upon good Security of Pleasure: You had rather spend it in the Service of *Venus* than of *Virtue*; rather consume by Inches, and pass through a Course of Physic, or a Sweating-tub into the next World, than to be well one Moment, and dead the next: If you call this a noble End, you will be at a Loss to assign an infamous one: In short, you are relapsed into your first Error, and only defend it with a new-found Extravagance: The Amendment is ridiculous, and impious into the Bargain.

Ariovistus saw he had spoke his Mind too frankly, before an Audience unacquainted with such Libertine Principles, and therefore he very nicely confessed, he had hitherto played the Fool. Sir, said he to *Eusebius*, though some abet the Doctrine I have delivered, yet it displeases me: I cannot close with such wild Ideas of Religion, and rather proposed 'em as a Jest than a Truth: I cannot commit a Crime to save my Skin, nor even purchase Life at the Price of Murder, or Adultery: And therefore I freely grant, that those Religions that enjoy Abominations in their *Rituals* and *Liturgies*, are out-dated, and exempted from the general Permission.

Euseb. I must own you have made a handsome Retreat; you have given a pretty Turn to a monstrous Principle; but for the future, pray remember, that to blaspheme in jest, is to sin in earnest. All the Religions at least are stanch, are they not? I put this Question to
avoid

avoid Mistakes, for we have been To-day upon the Blunder.

Ariov. They are.

Euseb. Remember your Concession, for by-and-by we shall discard all the idolatrous Worship of the old World, together with those of the new: The Roman, Grecian, and old Assyrian Polytheism, will no more pass Muster, than that of Mexico or Peru; Jupiter, Apollo, Mars, Juno, and Minerva, will be kick'd out of their Temples, as well as a *Vitziliputzli*. Will God be worshipped as an eternal Being, or as a Creature; as rational, or irrational; as infinitely holy, or as an Adulterer, Drunkard, or Murderer?

Aricvistus saw the Drift of this *Quære*, and was at a Stand for a handsome Answer; he perceived himself encompassed on all sides, and knew not which way to evade the Danger: To say God requires to be honoured, as a Being infinitely Holy, infinitely Wise, Eternal, and Independent, was to give up the Cause without Dispute, and to acknowledge himself foil'd before the Combat: On the other side, he durst not venture to affirm, God is content to be worshipped as a Creature, an Adulterer, or a Murderer; he thought such hideous Absurdities would grate upon the Ears of his Auditors, unaccustom'd to Blaiphemies, and ill-disposed to hear them without Indignation.

The Gentleman that came with him, saw his Concern, and resolved to disengage his Friend from the Embarrass; wherefore (turning himself to *Eusebius*) the Answer, said he, to your *Quære*, in my Opinion is obvious: God requires that Worship which corresponds to the natural Knowledge we have of him; now Nature tells me, he is a Being Eternal, Independent, infinitely Wise, and infinitely Holy, therefore God commands us to adore him under this Notion.

Euseb. You have brought the Controversy to the very Point I desired, and have utterly defeated your Friend's System: For if God must be adored as Eternal, Independent, infinitely Wise, infinitely Holy, had I been at Rome in the Reign of Jupiter, Apollo, Mercury, &c I could not have believed nor talked of God as the Ro-

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mans did; much less had it been lawful in *Egypt* to adore an *Onion*, an *Ox*, a *Crocodile*, or a *Hippopotamus*; for these Creatures have no Perfection, that comes near those noble Attributes of *Eternity and Independence*.

Saturn was *Jupiter's* Father, *Juno* his Sister, so that their Nativity must fall infinitely short of *Eternity*; it's of a very fresh Date, of a late Edition, and younger than *Time*: They had a Father, and therefore are dependent; their Sanctity keeps pace with their *Eternity*: *Jupiter* first welter'd in his Father's Blood, and then usurp'd his Kingdom; so that he rather deserv'd to be flung into the *Tibur* with a Cock and a Serpent, than to be seated in the Capitol; and the *Gemonie* better suited with his Crimes, than an Altar. *Juno* was a *Miss*, even to her Brother, and as infamous for Scolding, as her Incest; she deserved at least a House of Correction for the first Crime, and a Ducking-stool for the second. *Mercury* was a *Jack of all Trades*; sometimes he played the *Piper*, sometimes the *Sharper*; he turned *Post-boy* upon Occasions, and then *Cut-purse*: And to shew the World he could stoop to the basest Crimes, as well as the meanest Employments, he sets up for a *Pimp*, a *Pander*, and *Procurer*; *Apollo* may be said to be better than his Father, only because he was not quite so bad: His Amours were without Number, as they were without Shame: The Heathen *Theology* seems to have drawn in this Person the Picture of a perfect *Beau*; for it allowed him some Wit, more Beauty, a World of Impudence, but no Conscience. These were *Divinities* of the first Class, *majorum Gentium*, Gods of Quality and Figure, in fine, of the *Upper-House*; and yet Partiality itself would not have cleared them at any Bar: I except the Right of *Ignoramus Juries*, when Crimes found Mercy, and *Innocence* Halters. The *Egyptian* Deities, *Osiris* and *Anubis*, were of the same Stamp; they were neither better, nor more ancient, than those of *Rome* and *Greece*.

Now, Sir, if God commands us to worship him as an eternal and independent Being, we cannot clap in with a *Roman*, *Grecian*, or *Egyptian* Congregation; nay, nor with any idolatrous one, that is, or ever was, in the
World:

World: For they tell us, God is a *Man*, a *Woman*, a *Snake*, a *Tree*, a *Crocodile*, and a *Red-Cloth*; but it's evident these poor Creatures can claim no Right to Eternity, much less to Independence; therefore had I lived in these blind Ages, when Serpents crawl'd upon Altars, and Monsters invaded Temples, I could not prostrate myself before them; I must have protested against the Impiety, and rather have fallen by the Magistrate's Hand, than have paid Obedience to his Law.

Again, God will be worshipped as *infinitely Holy*; how then can you fall prostrate before an incestuous *Jupiter*, a thieving *Mercury*, a bloody *Mars*, a peevish *Juno*, or a prostitute *Venus*? Such Crimes entertain no Commerce with Sanctity; their Place is Hell, not Heaven, and the Criminals rather deserve Infamy and Tortures, than Adoration. Does he adore God as *infinitely Holy*, who acknowledges him guilty of Incest, Murder, Felony, and even of those Offences, that fright and startle Nature? That put to the Blush, not only the Modesty of the Innocent, but also the very Impudence of the Guilty? In fine, that infect Hell, and plague the Damned?

Moreover, God requires to be honoured as a *Being infinitely Wise*; by what Rule therefore can you, with those of *Coromandel*, say and believe he is an *Ape*? With the *Romans*, *Grecians*, and all the other idolatrous People of the World, he is a *Man*, a *Statue*? or with the superstitious *Egyptian*, he is an *Onion*, a *Wolf*, a *Crocodile*? Some of these fantastical Deities are even void of Sense, much more of Reason; and the Mendicancies have left Posterity no other Marks of their Reason but their Crimes: We know they had some Wit, by the enormous Abuses of it; their Wisdom had a small Reach, it went no farther than to lay Snares for fond Boys, or for simple Girls: Seeing therefore all the idolatrous Worship that was ever in the World, since the Birth of *Polytheism* to this very Moment clashes with those Notions under which God will be adored, you can no more join with any idolatrous Congregation, than with its Crimes. It remains therefore, that God's Permission is no more universal, than his Command; and though at first you were pleased to extend it to all Religions

Religions except two or three, you must now turn the Tables, and exclude all but two or three. So that to conclude, that great Principle, *we must conform to the Religions of those Countries where we live*, is not only false, but also scandalous to Extravagance.

Ariov. You fanfy I am run aground, and that you have wounded my Principles beyond Recovery; but stay, you have been upon the Ramble, and mistaken your Way: You reason upon a false Bottom; for you suppose Heathens worshipped Creatures, and paid Homage to Statues; whereas most certainly they ador'd the true God under those sensible Resemblances; nor can you reasonably presume they worshipp'd *Men, Statues, or Beasts*, unless you suppose them Fools, to make them impious. I might then with a safe Conscience adore *Jupiter, Apollo, and Venus at Rome*, and would now (were I in the *Indies*) bend before *Ram*, or in *Japan* before *Zacas*; for these visible Objects are but dark Emblems, or different Names of *God blessed for evermore*. Though therefore God commands me to adore him, as *Eternal, Independent, infinitely Holy, and infinitely Wise*, he has not determined under what Name; tho' we call him *Jupiter, Mars, or Apollo*, he scorns to formalize; if *Ram, Zacas, or Amidas*, he will not pet: A great Name adds not a Grain to his Perfections, nor can a vulgar Appellation diminish them. In fine, Reason teaches us his Nature, but his Name we learn from Custom, and this will vary till you bring all Languages to their primitive Unity; so that methinks you have all this while skirmish'd with a Shadow, or fenced with a *Nothing*: You have rais'd a sottish Idolatry in your Brain, merely to destroy it; but great Wits often mistake the Question, as well as great Blockheads: Like ill-bred Spaniels, they run at Check on a false Scent; flush their own Fancies for their Adversaries Opinion, and cry Victory, when they have handsomely lash'd their own Errors.

Euseb. Because just now I put you in mind of some Mistakes, and censured severely a Vein of Shuffling that runs through all your Discourse, you very fairly cruize for Reprisals, and would fain bring me in guilty
of

of the same Oversight I have legally proved upon you. Believe me, Sir, I have not capered in the Air: I aimed at your Principle, and have hit it; and you are sensible enough I am come up to the very Point in debate, and so start a new Question, either to entangle me, or to delude the Audience. But I intend not to wade far in this Controversy, *whether the Pagans adored the true God under the Shape of Jupiter, Apollo, &c.* Dr. Stillin. maintained they did, but all impartial Men wish'd he had employ'd his Talents on a more defensible Subject; for certainly his Reputation suffered in the Enterprize, and he had shew'd more Judgment in stepping over so nice a Point, than he did Wit in treating it so little to the Purpose.

However, because you have flung this Difficulty in my Way, I must take some Notice of it: Not that the Issue of our present Dispute depends on the Decision of this Question; but because I am resolved to give you full Satisfaction, I say then, *That the Heathens did not adore the true God, under the Name of Jupiter, Mars, Apollo, &c.* and this is so manifest a Truth, that a Man must shut his Eyes to overlook it: *Dii non fuerunt ab æterno, sed ita eorum quisquis natus est ut nos nascimur.* Your Gods (says Athenagoras to the Gentiles) are not eternal, they were all born as we are: And Min. Felix laughs at the Pagans for adoring those as Gods, who were born and died like Men: *Manifestum est homines illos fuisse, quos & natos legimus, & mortuos scimus.* St. Cyprian de Idol. Van. proves they were not Gods, because they have been Kings. *Deos non esse, quos colit Vulgus hinc notum est: Reges enim fuerunt:* And when some Gentiles (to elude those Christian Arguments they could not answer) had the Impudence to deny they worshipped any Man, Arnobius confutes their wretched Evasion, and proves home upon them, they really adore Men, though they blush'd to own the Folly, *Lib. 11. cont. Gent. Vos hominem nullum colitis? Non unum vel alium? Non innumeros alios? Quin imo non omnes, quos in Templis vestris mortalium sustulistis ex numero, & cælo sideribusque donastis? Et infra jam profecto discetis quibus singuli patribus, quibus matribus fuerint procreati;*

qua in regione nati, qua gente, quæ fecerint, egerint, per-tulerint. But to put an End to the Controversy, take a Turn to the Capitol, and you will see what Opinion the Pagans had of *Jupiter, qui ejus nutricem in Capi-toli posuerunt*, who placed his very Nurse, Wife, Sister, and Daughter in this august Temple. I might here bring a Cloud of Witnesses, who lived and conversed with Heathens, who studied their profane Theology to confute it; who were Men of Learning and Probity, and never calumniated an Adversary to oppress him: But what I have said suffices to convince a rational Man, that the Pagans adore Creatures, not the Creator, under borrowed Names as you pretend.

Ariov. Indeed the Vulgar might possibly mistake the Fables of *Homer* for Articles of Religion, and model their Faith by Ballads: they might divide God into Sex, and worship Men and Women before Statues their Representatives? but you must grant this gross Im-piety concern'd only the Rabble, the Philosophers and leading Men were above such an Absurdity.

Euseb. No doubt the Philosophers condemned in their Hearts those very Deities they adored; but their Prac-tice varied from their Judgment; and though they were Theists in the Schools, they were Polytheists in the Temples. God was not worshipped according to the Ideas of Philosophers, but of Poets. *Quid sibi vult ista non poetica sed inimica plane Varietas, Deos secundum Phi-losophos in libris querere, secundum Poetas in templis adorare, Aug. Lib. 2. de Consen. Evan. Cap. 23.* And if you doubt of this, I must desire you once more in *St. Austin's* Name to enter into the Capitol; this was the Seat of *Jupiter, O. M. id est*, of Rome's supreme God. Here you will find *Amalthea* a Goat, who nursed this Deity, his Sister, Wife, and Daughter; evident Arguments the *Romans* thought he was a Man to whom they paid supreme Honour: For if they thought he was eternal, why gave they him a Nurse? If independent, why did they confess he owed his Preservation to Goat's Milk? And then, if he were not a Man, what did he with a Wife? Or how came he by a Daughter? Do not tell me these are poetical Inventions; I know they are: But these

these Fables were exposed by the heathen Divines, and culled out of *Poems* to piece up Religion; they were absurd, it's true, yet believed by some, and revered by all. In fine, if Poets invented them, the Priests adopted them; they were conveyed from the Stage to the Temple by Blindness and Superstition, and what Men laughed at in one place, they adored in the other. *Nunquid & Capitolia Romanorum opera sunt Poetarum? August, Lib. 6. de Civ. Dei.*

But if we suppose against Scripture, against the Authority of Pagans themselves, and the concurrent Testimonies of Ages, that the Heathens did adore the supreme God *blest for evermore*; this will not better your Cause, nor prejudice mine: For still it's as clear as plain Fact can make a Thing, that when they worshipped him under the Shape of *Jupiter*, they clapped upon his infinite Sanctity *Rapes* and *Adulteries*; they impeached him of Robberies under the Notion of *Mercury*, of Cruelty under that of *Mars*, &c. Nay, they stripped him of all Wisdom under the Figures of Beasts, and even of Sense under those of *Onions*, *Fire*, and *Water*. If therefore we are obliged to adore God as a *Being Eternal, Independent, infinitely Holy, and infinitely Wise*; you could not believe nor worship God, as the old Heathens did, nor can you go over to any *Pagan Society* that now is, either in the *East* or *West-Indies*: For though they do worship the true and invisible God, under visible and material Images, yet they charge him with a thousand Impertinencies, destructive to those Notions under which he commands Worship. So that we must reform your *Thesis*, and dash out of the universal Permission, not only two or three, but two or three thousand Religions established in the World by Custom, and maintained by all the Supports of Force and Authority: For they outrage Nature, and burlesque God's most sacred Attributes; they rifle his Majesty. entrench upon his Wisdom, asperse his Sanctity, and turn his very Being into Farce and Raillery.

Ariorvistus was at a *Nonplus*, and his Concern flew to his Face: Nay, his usual Confidence withdrew, and even Raillery, that last Defence of Libertines, deserted him;

him; so that he made a Figure worthy of Laughter and Compassion: At last he resolved to gain Time for Reflection, and therefore addressing himself to the Lady; Madam, said he, I have almost talked myself out of Breath, an Hour's Respite will not be unseasonable; with your leave, we will put off the Conclusion till the Evening.

Upon Condition, answered the Lady, you'll return to the Conference, or condemn your Principle.

Ariov. I will be bound for my Appearance, or if you ask better Security, my Friend, I presume, will give in Bail for my forth-coming: Then turning himself to *Eusebius*; we are, continued he, in the Pit, and must fight it out: There is no place left for Retreat. Leaving the Company, he walked into the Garden, rather to conceal his *Chagrin*, than to take the Air: And indeed I wonder not at his Concern; for it is observed, that though Libertines hate Conscience, they are fond of Honour; they are Creatures made up of Pride and Arrogance, and therefore neither know how to bear an Advantage with Moderation, nor a Disappointment with Patience.

When he was gone, I am surprized, said the Lady, at the Gentleman's Confidence; surely his Assurance weighs more than his Judgment; why else will he bring his Cause to another Hearing? I love not to laugh at another Man's Misfortune, nor to draw Pleasure from his Confusion: But, methinks, I cannot be sorry to see Irreligion punished in its grand Protector: Humiliations work more on a Libertine's Understanding, than Demonstration; and those that cannot be argued out of loose Principles, are sometimes shamed out of them.

Were the Virtue of *Ariovistus* equal to his Wit, said his Friend, nothing can be more accomplished than he; but I must own, his Morals are bad, and his Principles worse: He laughs at the Difference between Good and Evil; and I have heard him say, *No Sin is blacker, than the very thinking there is any; nay, he defines Sin, a thing that some live by inveighing against, and others by practising.* And hence it is, that he not only makes

makes a Practice, but a Boast of Sin, and defends it with as much Greediness as he commits it.

Euseb. But, Sir, though such Men carry off the Reputation of Wit, they have too little of the Man, to be the Standard of Mankind; we are not, God be thanked, Fools enough to take Scoffs for Arguments, nor Raillery for Reason: He is a great *Ignoramus*, who knows not that it is easier to sport with Virtue, than to practise it; indeed, if *Ariovistus* could jest Sin into *Nothing*, his Mirth would not be unreasonable; but the wild Humour of a Debauchee, cannot work upon the Nature of Things: Wit may dive into Essences, but not transmute them. However, I hope to reason the Gentleman out of Conceit both of his Wit and Religion, and to persuade him that those are Fools who sport themselves into Hell; and that none more certainly do so, than those who make a jest of Sin, and a *Pag-eant* of Religion: For though a Man who dares defy God, and look Damnation in the Face, may be witty, I am sure he is superlatively foolish. *Eudoxus* was no less mortified than *Ariovistus*. He was not indeed concerned at his Disgrace; no, he rather felt Symptoms of Indignation than of Pity; and wished he had defended his *Post* with greater Bravery, or rendered it with more Ignominy: For having been deluded by *Ariovistus*, he thought the Weakness of his Defence would glance upon his own Reputation, and that the World would tax him of Levity or Simplicity, for embracing Latitudinarianism upon so weak Grounds. One would swear, said he in a Passion, these Men by their Talk had engrossed all the Wit of the Nation, as well as the Vices; yet bring them to the Touchstone, and you'll find nothing but Dross; they argue as ill as they believe, and are as great Strangers to Reason, as to Virtue; they dispute no more methodically than they live, and are as weak in Principle, as violent in Passion. *Eudoxus* was going on, when Dinner put an end to his Invective. *Ariovistus* had not walked away his Resentment, he brought it to Table, and even discovered it by endeavouring to conceal it: He run up Pleasantry to Affectation, and made himself ridiculous not to ap-

pear in a Passion: So that the Lady told him with a Smile, *He was merry out of Vexation*; but *Ariovistus* let the Compliment fall, thinking it the best way to connive at a petty Affront he durst not revenge, and so they entered upon a Conversation of indifferent Subjects.

DIALOGUE XII.

Ariovistus is forced to confess, that one only Religion is saving.

THE Lady invited the Company into the Garden after Dinner: She was impatient to see the Issue of the Dispute, which she hoped would prove disadvantageous to *Ariovistus*: Nay, the Morning Success had not only allayed her Fears, but even given her an Assurance, that Truth would triumph over Falsity, and Religion over Impiety; besides, she flattered herself, her Son would profit by *Ariovistus's* Misfortune, and desert those Tenets his Master was not able to defend; for he was dissatisfied with the Morning's Performance, and the Abilities of *Ariovistus* came not up to his Expectation: He saw him always upon the Retreat, and that he rather shuffled than argued; he scarce durst look an Argument in the Face, and though he sometimes fenced off Blows, he never gave any: In fine, he turned short upon himself, and generally confuted one Reply by the Contrariety of the other; so that *Eudoxus* suspected the Cause of *Ariovistus* was no better than the Defence of it, and that he pleaded it, because it was destitute of Reason.

After a Turn or two in the Garden, the Lady leading the Company into an *Arbor*, methinks, said she to *Ariovistus*, this Place was made for Conversation; we have both Time and Convenience to give a second Hearing: You are I am sure a Gentleman of your Word.

Ariov.

Ariov. Madam, I desire nothing more : Let us then, continued he, turning himself to *Eusebius*, begin where we broke off this Morning : Be pleased, Sir, to remember, I cast before you a Scheme of those Religions that are *A-la-mode* among our young Town-sparks. Some are so amazingly irreligious, as to turn Religion into a Trick of State ; they say it is a Slave to Government, and cannot oblige till it passes into Law, but then it's binding, though never so execrable.

Others retrench from this Command, those Religions that welter in Blood, and flame with Prostitution ; such Religions, they say, are framed from *Cyclops*, and calculated for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* : A Man must turn a Lion, or Baboon, to practise the Duties of such Churches, and a Devil to command them ; wherefore they stigmatize the Believers of such scandalous Tenets, and throw both the *Credenda* and *Agenda* out of the Pale of God's Permission : But then, a few excepted, all others, they say, are allowed of ; a good Intention rectifies their Errors, and even compounds for Idolatry itself ; it persuades God to wink at Impiety, and to take Affront for Veneration. This is, no doubt, to trespass upon his Goodness, to make bold with his Greatness, and to treat his Majesty with Scorn and Contempt.

The Company smiled, and admired no less the Gentleman's Confidence, than the Contrivance ; by this little Artifice, he very handsomely heaved the Shame of the Defeat from himself to those young Sparks, whose *Persuasion* he pretended to defend : But the Imposture lay too open to trepan the Company, for he disputed not as *Second*, But as *Principal* ; and pleaded his own Cause, not others : But those Men are above the Niceties of Honour, or Punctilio's of Conscience.

Eusebius knew not well how to model his Countenance, he was both tempted to laugh, and to frown ; for the Turn was witty, though impudent. At last, Sir, said he to *Ariovistus*, I thought you had undertaken the Defence of your own Religion, not of *John an Oakes* ; I love not to encounter *Representatives*, nor to engage with *Corporations* by Proxy. However, I am

you have changed Sides, and left the *Post* of an *Advocate* for that of an *Accuser*; we have at last made some Progress: For now it is agreed on, that in spite of Mr. *Hobbs* and his Profelytes, the Laws of Common-wealth must not be the Standard of our Faith; that God permits not, much less commands us, to convene with those Congregations in Religion, that countenance Impieties; in fine, that Idolatry invades God's Right, strikes at his Prerogative, and draws upon his very Person: So that in Conclusion, those Religions that are permitted, take up but little room, and may be cast up without the help of *Arithmetic*: Now, Sir, favour us with a Draught of your Tenets.

Arioso. With all my Heart, I neither b'ush to acknowledge my Religion, nor fear to defend it: It is upright in its Principles, and reasonable in the Application: It is fitted for all Capacities: The Peasant comprehends it, and the Philosopher admires it: In a Word, my Religion is, what Men call *Natural*: It is of the same Date with our Nature, and came into the World with *Adam*: God printed every Article of it in our Hearts, before the Invention of the *Press*, and it is propagated by Generation: We carry our Gospel and Prophecies within us, which can neither be corrupted by Malice, Ignorance, or Inadvertency. Our *Creed* is plain, and our *Decalogue* short, but comprehensive. *We believe a God, maker of Heaven and Earth; a God that punishes Vice, and rewards Virtue; he requires no Sacrifice but of our Hearts, no Respect, but Awe of his Grandeur, and Obedience to his Commands; nor does his Law put any Precept upon us but this, Do as you would be done by.*

This Religion is universal; it is neither confined to Time, nor Place; it takes in all Ages, and runs thro' all Climates; it obliges the most occult Nations of the World, together with the most polite; and because all know its Precepts, no Man is exempted from their Obedience: Yet it permits those Rites and Ceremonies, though vain and superstitious, which clash not with the abovementioned Tenets: But the very Moment a Religion coins an Article, opposite to the Belief of a God, or contrary to the Attributes of his Sanctity, Wisdom,

Wisdom, and Justice, or Mercy, when it refuses to this all-powerful Being an Acknowledgment of Dependence, and withal reveries this great Law of Nature, *Quod tibi non vis fieri alteri ne feceris*; I say, the Moment a Religion falls into such bare-faced Impieties, it becomes sacrilegious and abominable: And for this Reason, I extend God's Permission to three only Religions, the *Christian*, *Jewish*, and *Mahometan*; for these alone stand upon the Law of Nature; they insil most excellent Principles, and regulate our Duty to God, and our Obligation to Men.

Euseb. Do you speak your own Thoughts? I put the Question for a Caution against Mistakes, for we have played away the Morning at *cross Questions*.

Ariov. It is my Opinion, and will stand the most severe Test of Reason; nothing material can possibly be brought against it.

Euseb. For all that, I hope to banish two of the three Religions out of the Permission; nay, and force you to confess, there are no more Religions than Gods. A Man, you say, may commence a Jew, when he has taken pet at Christianity, and change Baptism for Circumcision; and when he has taken a Surfeit of the *Talmud*, he may piously strike off to *Mecca*, and truck the *Pentateuch* for the *Alcoran*.

Ariov. He may.

Euseb. With a safe Conscience, therefore, in *England* we may believe *Christ* is the true *Messias*, born of a Virgin, true God, and true Man, who died for our Sins, and was butchered by our Malice; but when we have given up our Names to a Rabbin, and are adopted into one of the Tribes, we may change Language, and as safely protest the *Messias* is yet to come; that *Christ* is a mere Man, nothing different from others, but that he was more criminal; that he died for his own Offences, not for ours; that Justice took him off, not Envy: We may believe these Tenets, and swear to the Truth of every Tittle. The *Christian* engages God's Authority for the Truth of his *Creed*, the *Jew* takes the same Liberty; yet one Side jars with the other. Here is a down-right Contradiction, nor can all

the Artifice of Logic, all the Power of the Almighty reconcile both Sides. If the Christian be in the right, the Jew is in the wrong; and if Truth stands for the Jew, it must of necessity abandon the Christian.

Ariov. You have Reason, but because I know not which Side Truth favours, I may join with either.

Euseb. Supposing your Pretensions grounded, you cannot take both Sides; for though you are ignorant with which Party Truth sides, you are sure it can't stand for both: So that though in your Hypothesis you may either be Jew or Christian, you can't be both successively: If you swear to the Christian Symbol To-day, and to the Jewish To-morrow, you are perjured beyond all peradventure; for you know the Tenets of these two Churches don't nick like *Tallies*.

But this is not all, continued *Eusebius*, if God permits me to take up with the Brethren of the Circumcision, he permits me to refuse Worship to *Jesus Christ*; nay, to blaspheme him: If I may turn off to the Christians, he permits me to adore him. Now either he is God, or he is not: If the Second, I must not adore him, for though God be Master of his Favours, he is not of his Honour; he can't make this over to any Creature by a Deed of Gift, or Conveyance; though he be eternal, like a *Minor*, he can't alienate the Title: But again, if Christ be God, certainly he requires Adoration as an indispensable Duty, and if we fail to discharge ourselves of the Obligation, God will not fail to punish our Neglect.

Moreover, God can't, you say, permit those Offences that Nature condemns; his Prerogative-royal reaches not so far: Now what can intrench more upon Nature, than to invest a Creature with the Title to a Worship which God alone can claim a Right to? Than to withdraw my Allegiance from the Creator of all Things, and bow to my Fellow-creature? Yet God permits Christianity on the one side, and on the other it is flat Idolatry to adore Christ if he be only Man; therefore if Christ be only Man, God permits Idolatry; *id est*, a Sin of the highest Malice against the very first Principle of Nature: It is then as evident that one of these Religions is forbid, as that one is mere Practice

Practice and Imposture ; and it is as manifest, that one is Practice and Imposture, as that both Members of a Contradiction can't possibly be true.

Ariov. Were I sure that Christ was God, I should lie under an indispensable Obligation of adoring him ; I must then adhere to Christianity, and if Occasion required, sign my Faith with my Blood : And were I sure he was Man alone, I ought to wheel off from the Church to a Synagogue, and exchange the Gospel for the Talmud : But I am in the Dark, I rove in Obscurity, and cannot determine for which Religion Truth stands : In this Uncertainty God permits me to clap in with either ; my Ignorance justifies his Permission, and my Choice ; and though by refusing to adore Christ I may not do him Right, Ignorance hinders me from doing him Wrong : Thus though the Jews deprive him of his Due, if he be God, and the Christians give him more than his Due, if he be not ; yet their Sin can be only material, that is without Malice, and consequently without Offence ; seeing neither Religion is impious in its Worship, and both excellent in their Precepts of Morality, it's clear we may follow either.

Euseb. Never did Men talk more of Religion than we, and never had Men less. To level Judaism with Christianity, even in a Christian, nay, a reform'd Christian, is one of the most monstrous Attempts that ever I heard of : The very Thought of so bold a Blasphemy almost casts me into an Agony, and makes me sweat with Disgust : This is to raise a Cross for our blessed Redeemer in *Christendom*, as the *Jews* did in *Jerusalem*, to play upon his Goodness, to revile his Greatness, and to salute him with a *Crucifige* : But what will not Men do to support a dying Cause, who have nothing left, but *Will* and *Forehead* ? Your Religion, Sir, is not calculated up for 1700, but for 1642, or thereabouts, when the *Ten Commandments* were only authentic during *Pleasure*, when the four *Evangelists* were upon their *Behaviour*, with a *quandiu se bene gesserint*, and a *nemine contradicente*, not the *Bible*, govern'd the Pulpit : In fine, your very Defence of Religion strikes at Religion, and whilst you approve either, you fairly condemn both ; for you pretend both the Jewish and Christian

stian Religion are permitted, because you doubt of both, and know not on which side Truth stands: Now supposing you are in such Circumstances, it's evident you can't in Conscience embrace either; for which Side soever you take, you fear you are in the wrong: Now whosoever squares his Actions by a dubious Dictamen of Conscience, is certainly guilty of a *formal Sin*, though otherwise the Objects are not only *lawful*, but *laudable*. This is an unquestionable Principle in Morals, and can only be denied by those who make no Difference between *Good* and *Evil*. If therefore you adore Christ with the Christian, and at the same time doubt of his Divinity, you offend God in the very Act of Worship: You are a kind of a Pagan, though no Idolater. On the other Side, if you blaspheme him with the Jew, if you strip him of his Divine Nature, if you herd him with the accursed Crew of Hypocrites, and Impostors, and at the same time suspect he is more than a Man, though the Doubt may perchance diminish the Sin, it cannot possibly excuse it.

Ariov. This is pretty. Must I then, like old *Erasmus*, dangle in the Air between both Churches? Or if I doubt of all Religions, must I profess none? Certainly, Sir, you mistake your Errand: Whilst you pull down Latitudinarianism, you very fairly set up Atheism; and lest *all Religions should be saving*, you disallow of *all*. I would set out at *Jordan*, and take my Progress from one Religion to another, I would let any Man write upon me *Turk, Jew, Anabaptist, Presbyterian, Independent*, or what Persuasion you please, rather than an *Atheist*. In fine, it's more orthodox to profess any Religion than none.

Euseb. Under Favour, I would no more persuade you to condemn all Religions than to approve all. I know there is a true Religion, and I am sure there is but one. Nay, I am confident, that the Christian Religion carries so many visible Marks of divine Revelation about it, that a Man who will bring Things to a sober Examen, must confess it came from Heaven, and that he who turns Christianity into a Fable, or the Doctrine of the Bible into Illusion, deserves either
to

to be begged for a Fool, or to be stigmatized for a Blasphemer. But if you waver with Doubts, and fluctuate between the *Synagogue* and the *Church*, without being able certainly to determine in which Truth is preach'd, in which Imposture; rouse up your Reason, bring both to the Bar, hear their Pretensions, examine the Motives of Credibility, and, in fine, sum up the Evidence, and if you do this impartially, you'll soon either be a Madman, or a Christian.

Ariov. But if after I have heard the Witnesses, and weighed the Evidence on both Sides with Deliberation, Maturity and Impartiality; if, I say, after these ceremonial Preliminaries, I remain ambiguous, must I neither convene with the *Jew*, nor the Christian?

Euseb. With neither, if this strange Case should happen: I say, should happen; for in reality it cannot, the Motives of Christianity are so many, and so convincing, that unless we shut our Eyes, and hood-wink Reason, they'll force us to acknowledge, that if it be not evidently true, it's at least evidently credible; and when once you are come up to this Certainty, then you are obliged to declare for Christianity, to believe its Tenets, and practise its Morals.

Ariov. Though Christianity compared with Judaism may seem credible, perchance it may seem incredible, if compared with some other Religion, that has never appeared on our Horizon: For as there are *Terræ Incognitæ*, unknown Regions, so there are undiscover'd Religions. Must I therefore take my leave of *Old England*, trudge to Sea, and encompass the World with *Sir Francis Drake*, before I pitch upon a Religion? Or, must I at last rig out a Vessel of Intelligence, and then work upon those Materials the Captain or Mate brings home? This is a Work both tedious and expensive; nay, I may add, endless and foolish: and he that can persuade himself God requires such a puzzling and so impossible a Scrutiny, must confess the wise Maker of all Things intended rather to be laugh'd at by Men, than worshipped.

Euseb. Keep at home, God neither commands you to ship for *Africa*, or *America*, nor to run in quest after

the Fables of the *Brachmans*, or the Superstitions of the *Bonzies*. A Religion that is evidently credible in *England*, is so all the World over, with what Sect soever you compare it: For neither God's Goodness nor Wisdom can permit a false Religion to be equally credible with the true one; much less can he permit it to be more credible, and least of all, to be evidently credible: If therefore, after a sober Examen, you find such an Appearance of Truth in the Christian Religion, that you cannot doubt of it without Imprudence and Rashness, you may conclude, without comparing it with any other, that you are obliged to adhere to it, as revealed by God; and if you refuse to believe his supreme Veracity (when you cannot without a high Imprudence doubt but he speaks) you must expect to pay for the Contempt, by groaning eternally under the Weight of his Indignation: Dash therefore out of the *Patent* one of these two Religions, and I counsel you, out of Respect to the Baptism you have received, and the Kingdom you live in, rather to give up Judaism than Christianity; and after all, Sir, Circumcision is painful, and our *English* Constitutions will not bear the Operation.

Ariov. Take your Course, we have been upon Duty a great while, and I am willing to come to an Agreement upon any Terms.

Euseb. To an End, you mean, of the Dispute; for we can no more agree than Light and Darkness, than Truth and Falshood, than Libertinism and Religion. The present Question is, whether a Man may in Conscience conform to the *Alcoran* in *Constantinople*, and to the Gospel in *Christendom*. Pray what Opinion have you of the *Alcoran*? Was it compiled by divine Inspiration, or Imposition? By a Prophet, or a Cheat? By the Impulse of the Holy Ghost, or the Suggestion of Lewdness and Ambition?

Ariov. Every Tittle breathes Nonsense, Impiety, or Blasphemy: It puts almost the very Alphabet out of Countenance, and infects the Paper it's writ on. A Man must commence Fool, before he can impose upon his
his

his Reason those Forgeries for Revelations; and turn Beast to practise the Morals.

Euseb. Enough: Why so much Heat, so much Invective against a Religion that comes within the Verge of Permission? If tolerated, it deserves Respect; if not, why do you defend it? It's ridiculous to damn the *Alcoran*, and canonize the Doctrine; to censure *Mahomet*, and approve *Mahometism*.

But pray, Sir, if the *Alcoran* favours Lewdness, and lets loose Sensuality; if it draws upon Modesty, and tilts at Reason; if it gorges with Impiety, and smells of Blasphemy; how can you put on the *Turban*, and herd with the *Mussulman*? For when you jump over the Pale of Christianity, and give up your Name to the *Cady*, or *Musty*, you must take up for Truths those Fables you now brand with Forgery and Imposture; you must change the Key to another Tune; you must revere at *Constantinople* what you laugh at in *London*, and bow to what you ridicule; you must say and believe Untruths is the Language of Heaven, Blasphemy the Dictates of the *Holy Ghost*; Murders, Lewdness, and Rapines, the Commands of a meek, holy, and just Deity; for the *Turks* take all the *Alcoran* for Revelation and Precept: Now to say God has revealed some Things that clash with Truth, others that check Reason, and others again that overshoot Extravagance; that he commands some Things that discountenance Virtue, and encourage Libertinism, is to strike at all his Attributes, and to make at his very Person; it's to frame a more vile Idea of his Divinity, than the very *Laplander*; for theirs is only ridiculous, whilst yours is sacrilegious and execrable.

Ariov. Were I at *Constantinople*, I would speak like the *Musty*, and do like a *Mussulman*; but then in my Closet I would laugh at their Folly, and pity their Blindness: Though my Tongue conform'd to the establish'd Religion, my Heart should be a *Recusant*. This should adore God in Spirit and in Truth, though my Tongue and outward Man worshipp'd him with Blasphemies, and serv'd him in Sensuality: All exterior Actions are to be rated by the interior, this is their proper Standard;

Standard; if the Intention be Sterling, they cannot possibly be Counterfeit.

Euseb. Ho! we are just where we set out: Now all Religions are permitted again.

Ariov. Why so?

Euseb. If the Intention can sanctify *Hypocrisy*, and the most outrageous Blasphemies, why may it not convey Piety into Murders; and Holiness into the impure *Sabbaths* of *Venus* and *Priapus*? Why can't it blanch over the Horror of the *Mexicans* human Sacrifices, or the Cruelty of the *Punic* burning Statues of *Saturn*? You may, you say, at *Constantinople*, expose Christianity to the Scorn and Petulency of Infidels, give up the *Bible* to *Turks* and *Barbarians*, impeach Christians of Apostacy, and make Impudence and Inspiration speak the same Language: If a good Intention can justify at *Constantinople* such a Catalogue of black Impieties, why may it not authorize less Crimes in other Places? Return boldly to your first *Thesis*; exclude no Religion out of the Act of Indulgence; place Virtue and Vice on the same Level; pull down the Boundaries between Good and Evil; take off the Restraint of Conscience, and blend Men and Beasts into one *Species*. Come, Sir, pluck up a good Heart; cast the *Die*, and pass the *Rubicon* of Honour and Conscience, our Dispute will otherwise be at an End; for we have cast out the *Talmud* as Apocryphal; you have discarded the *Alcoran*; so that the Gospel only stands untouched, and God's Permission is confin'd to Christianity alone.

Ariovistus found himself in the Toil, and knew not which way to unhamper himself; his Concern flew to his Face, and every Posture betrayed an extreme Passion; he seem'd to brood some desperate Resolution, and only wanted Boldness to execute it: After a short Strife between Shame and Revenge, I perceive, said he to *Euseb.* you take Advantage of my Condescension, and even turn my Civility against me; you manage a Favour so ungenteely, that I shall stand off in Caution and Reservedness for the future.

Euseb. Explain your Meaning. I suppose in Disputes Reason must take place of Ceremony, and that a Man
may

may press an Argument home without trespassing upon good Breeding; to be plain, I am more beholden to my Arguments than to your Liberality; you have condescended to me, as *Boufflers* did to King *William*, when he could hold out no longer. In a Word, I have not courted, but stormed you into those Concessions you blush at.

Ariow. Hold there; I laid the *Alcoran* at your Mercy without Necessity, and attack'd it of Imposture, Falacy, and Blasphemy, out of an Excess of Good-nature and Complaisance.

Euseb. Out of Good-nature and Complaisance?

Ariow. Yes, for among Friends it carries an Air of Truth, and the unlimited Extent of that Persuasion pleads home for the Divinity of its Author.

Euseb. Ho! ho! we have *Turks* in *England*: I thought the *Ottoman* Religion reached no farther than the *Ottoman* Sword; but I perceive it has swam* over into our Island. Pray, continued he with a Smile, what is your *Turkish* Appellation? *Solyman*, or *Achmet*? But Raillery apart; had I been upon the Pinch, I would have dropt the *Turk*, and kept the Christian: For a Christian *Turk* is a frank Atheist once removed, and though he makes Profession of a God, and of a Religion, most Men conclude he believes neither. Indeed, by this unexpected Declaration, you have disappointed me; I intended to prove, that one only Religion was saving, and that all others were cast out of the *Act for Toleration*: But you have made clever Work of it, and discarded all Religions, nay, and I fancy Salvation too.

Ariow. With Permission, Sir, though I approve the *Alcoran*, I may reverence the Gospel: And though I unlock Heaven's-gate to *Mussulmans*, why must I shut it upon Christians?

Euseb. Why? One runs quite counter to the other, even in the most essential Points, both of Belief and Practice. Christian Religion tells us, Christ is God; the *Mahometan*, that he is not: That commands us to adore him, this forbids us. Now, Sir, if Truth favours the *Turks*, Christ is a mere Creature, and by consequence all Creatures are downright Idolaters: If there-

therefore God will be adored as a Being *Eternal*, infinitely *Wise*, and infinitely *Holy*, it's evident, you (who discover Truth on every Tittle of the *Alcoran*) cannot, with a safe Conscience, profess Christianity; for that great Oracle tells us, Christ is a Creature, and therefore so soon as you commence Christian, you pay divine Honour to a Man, known and acknowledged such: Now to adore God, as a Man, is not to worship him as a Being *Eternal*, infinitely *Wise*, and infinitely *Holy*; and to adore a Man, as God, is to strip the Almighty of all his Prerogatives, to rife the Sanctuary, and to lay the consecrated Treasures at the Feet of a Creature: Here is a flat Idolatry on the one Hand, and a Monster composed of Idolatry and Sacrilege on the other. So that to sum up the Evidence, if *Turcism* be a true and allow'd Religion, Christianity is not; and so my Thesis is proved, that one Religion alone is saving: Which glorious Quality, to the Shame of Latitudinarianism, and the Scandal of Reason, you clap on *Mahometism*.

The Lady, overjoy'd at the Defeat of *Ariovistus*, was not Mistress of her Transport: These Gentlemen, said she, are for ensuring Causes, and never speak under Demonstration: Then turning to him, Sir, continued she, I pity your Malice, but I am glad of your Overthrow; you have been more at Variance with yourself, than your Adversary, and seldom recall'd one Absurdity, without advancing a greater; but at length, in defiance of Sense and Reason, you have out-shot Extravagance itself, and sealed a Million of Impertinences with a daring Blasphemy: For you have raised up *Mahometism* upon the Ruins of Christianity, and sunk our blessed Saviour into an Impostor, to swell *Mahomet* into a Prophet. I counsel you to ship for *Asia* in our *Smyrna* Fleet, for our *English* Climate is mortal to a *Turkish* Constitution; these Animals can no more live here, than Toads or Spiders in *Ireland*: Our *English* Charity embraces all Men, besides *Papists* and *Mussulmans*: Those have too much Religion for a reform'd Nation, and these too little.

This

This piquant Irony gall'd *Ariovistus* to the quick; Patience abandon'd him, and Passion ran away with his Judgment: So that at length he broke through all the Bounds even of Respect and Reason. Madam, said he, I perceive you are surpris'd at my Doctrine; out of Respect to your Ladyship, I freely condemn the *Alcoran* as Practice and Imposture; but then give me leave to put the Gospel in the *Indice* also: They were both hammer'd on the same Anvil; this to hag Men with Fears, the other to divert them with pleasing Prospects of sensual *Elysiums*: We have been *bob-goblin'd* too long into Religion; but, God be thank'd, the Vizard is torn off, and the Cheat is unmask'd, and now we dare play with those Monsters we once trembled at: We enter upon the Stage of this World like Beasts, and make as inglorious an *Exit*; our Lives and Souls smoke into Nothing: We were flung upon Earth, as the *Leviathan* was in the *Deep* to play; seeing therefore our Days are few, it's Prudence to live apace; Good and Evil are Words *ad placitum*, invented by some to impose on others.

He was going on, when *Eusebius* put a Stop to his Impudence. I suspected, says he, you acted hitherto in Masquerade; I am glad the Vizard is fallen off, and that the Monster appears in its own Shape: Men of your Principles should be coop'd up in *Pest-houses*, their very Breath shoots Contagion, and their Conversation is mortal. Your Atheistical Club has made Religion cheap, and Morality shameful: It has preach'd a considerable Part of the Nation out of Sobriety, and Principles too: It teaches young Gentlemen to swear and blaspheme, before they know the Malice of the Sins; and then when Age opens their Eyes, they rather part with their Innocence, than their Prophaneness. Thus you espouse 'em to Wickedness, before they are able to commit it: But the Misery is, that those who curse God in their Youth, in good time will defy him; and others who transgress the Decalogue at ten, will laugh at it before twenty. Boldness grows upon us with Age, and all the Terrors of Conscience declines; they faint under the Weight of reiterated Crimes, and
lose

lose their *Emphasis* ; and then when once we have got out of the Reach of this importunate Cenfor, we shall swallow down your accursed Principles, not only without Reluctance, but even with Pleasure : We shall not only countenance Atheism, but profess it ; and easily persuade ourselves we die like Beasts, to live like them.

I know you are no more able to defend your Morals, than your Faith ; and I would rather detest, than confute 'em, were I not acquainted with the Latitudinarian Impudence : You vent such hideous Tenets, that they amaze Christians, and rather raise their Indignation, than call for a Confutation ; like Puddles, they cannot be stirred without Infection, and like Plague Sores, they endanger the Surgeon.—Now because good Men sometimes think it more expedient to confute those Impieties with Silence, than Arguments, Libertines presently raise a Trophy, they sing *Pæana*, and cry out *Victory*. To cut off this Retreat, I'll shew you in short, that Virtue and Vice lie not barely in Opinion.

And here I appeal to the Verdict of Mankind : Single me out one Man, whose Reputation did not suffer under the very Suspicion of Vice ; and if the bare Suspicion of Evil has such a degrading Quality in the Opinions of Men, Debauchery itself must have a greater : Human Nature has such an Abhorrence of Sin, that it cannot value the Wicked equally to the Virtuous. I never yet heard of a Man, who seriously commended another for his Intemperance, or placed Lewdness among his Titles of Honour : Though Sobriety, Chastity, and Justice are run down in Practice, they stand fair in our Esteem, and no Man yet has attempted to disgrace an Enemy, by laying those Virtues to his Charge : In fine, it's impossible for a Man in his Wits to esteem another less, because he is good ; nay, in this degenerate Age, nothing blasts more a rising Reputation, than the Imputation of Wickedness ; and even those, who in a frantic Transport applaud a Debauchee, upon cooler Thoughts despise him : If all Actions are equal, why are their Effects so different ? If Virtue has no Advantage

tage over Vice, why do the Profligates esteem that, though they embrace this? Why do Men practise Virtue with Confidence, and Vice with a blushing Face, and a trembling Conscience? Why do they sin with Fear in their Looks, and an Earthquake in their Minds? These are terrible Symptoms, that the Difference between Good and Evil lies deeper than the Imagination.

Come, Sir, remember when you feel the Smart of everlasting Flames, you'll take small Pleasure in the Thought that once you derided 'em; you'll not suffer less in that dark Region, because you go laughing thither; nor endure the Torments better, because you would not believe 'em.

Ariovistus was of too haughty a Humour to bear so severe a Check with Patience, and too violent to dissemble his Resentment; wherefore turning to *Eusebius*, Sir, said he, you rail better than you reason: Our Tongues began to dispute, our Swords must end; you have left my Tenets, to attack my Person, and rather level at my Actions, than at my Religion: You are a Man of Honour, and can manage a Weapon, as well as an Argument; in a Word, I expect Satisfaction.

The Company began to smile at this odd Rhodomontade, but *Eudoxus* told him, in controvertistical Debates there was no Appeal from Reason to the Sword; that it was more prudent to confess Errors, than to defend them; to cancel past Crimes, than to commit new ones.

But *Eusebius*, who resolved to discountenance Latitudinarianism, by confounding its Abetter, took him up roundly. Sir, said he, I fear your Gasconades no more than your Arguments, nor your Sword more than your Reason; your Conduct is as strange as your Religion; because I have wounded your Principles, you invite me to tilt at your Body: No, no, Sir, I value my Life too much to expose it for a Punctilio, and your Soul to send it into another World with a Rapier: I had rather swing off *Tyburn* into Eternity, than to be duel'd into it; for a Duel is a very ill Distemper to die of.

Besides, should I accept your Challenge, perchance you might disappoint me: I have known some huffing Bullies,

Bullies, who never were courageous but when they stood out of Sword's Reach: They would send you a hundred Defies for a Word, but had too much Honour to justify one; nay, they would, upon second Thoughts, submit to a Bastinado, rather than occasion Bloodshed; and if once their Adversary drew Blood, like Wizards, they had no Power to hurt him; in fine, they would always begin the War, and constantly made the first Overtures of Peace, and thus they shewed at once both Courage and Discretion; whether this Character fits you, I dare not determine: This notwithstanding I must affirm, that those who pretend to believe least the Terrors of another World, apprehend them most; and no Men fear more eternal Torments, than those who deny the Soul's Immortality: Lay by your Sword for a more urgent Occasion, fencing will never relieve a Controversy abandon'd by Reason; a satisfactory Return to my Arguments will support you much better than a Push; for though you chance to foil me at tilting, you will not disarm my Reasons.

Ariovistus was too proud to submit to Truth, though he was too weak to withstand it; he could not defend his Errors, and would not abandon 'em; so that in a Huff he called for his Horse, rubb'd off, and left the Field to *Eusebius*.

His Friend apologized for his Rudeness, and cast his Incivility on the Excess of Passion. I hope, said he to the Company, you will excuse *Ariovistus*. I confess he is to blame, but oftentimes Anger runs away with the Judgment; the wisest Men are subject to Indiscretions: He was baffled, and you know a Defeat to a Man of Honour is a mortifying Misfortune; in fine, having lost his Cause, you must not wonder if Patience deserted him.

Euseb. I excuse his Incivility, but condemn his Prudence; he saw his Error, why did he not abjure it? He saw Truth, why did he not embrace it? A Man that will pawn his Soul to rescue his Honour, forfeits both: But I confess, in vain we expect Prudence of Libertines; Men without Religion are always without Reason;

Reason; they may boast of Science and Wit till Doomsday, but no body can believe they are overstock'd with either: No, no; they have only just Knowledge enough to see their Errors, and Wit enough to ensure their Damnation; when once they are drenched in loose Principles, they are past Recovery; they turn all Antidotes into Ratsbane, and so either live in Obstinacy, or die in Despair.

Then taking *Eudoxus* aside: Are you not, continued he, almost sick of Latitudinarianism? You saw how weakly *Ariovistus* defended it, yet he was not ill provided of those Materials, that are necessary to plead well a bad Cause; he managed his Arguments to the best Advantage, and edged his Reasons with all the little Artifices of Language and Confidence; but Truth has prevailed over Imposture, and he carries home nothing but Chagrin and Confusion. I hope Providence has reserved the Profit of his Defeat for you; he has condemned all Religions, and Christianity among the rest, and at the same time turns Atheist to live a Libertine.

Eudox. Nothing but Rage drove *Ariovistus* into that Precipice; he was upon a Pinch, poor Gentleman, and shot Blasphemy when he had spent his Reasons; his Performance falls short of my Expectation. I perceive that Boasting is not an Argument of Wit, and that Confidence and Truth are not always upon the same Side. *Ariovistus*, who caused my Infidelity, has now cured it; I owe my Conversion to the Weakness of his Proofs, and to the Strength of yours. Christianity is certainly the only saving Religion, but I am hamper'd in a Labyrinth, and unless you lend me a Hand, shall wander eternally in a Meander of Mistakes: For Christian Religion branches out into a thousand Sects, our Island is a kind of *Pantheon*, and our People like the old *Arabians*, bend to the Breath of every pretended Inspiration: Some pretend Law, others Scripture; these Antiquity, those Novelty, and others Illumination. It's hard to calculate up all the Religions that divide the Nation, and almost impossible to examine them. If I must choose none before I have impartially survey'd

survey'd all, I may live a *Seeker*, and die an *Atheist*. Are all those Communion's saving; or is there but one?

Euseb. There is but one saving Congregation, and the Discovery of it is easier than you imagine: In a few Days I will put you in the Way to Heaven, which none can miss, but those that are resolv'd to overlook it: Interest biasses some, Education others; Faction deludes many, and Sensuality overbears more: In fine, when Men consult their Inclinations, and model Religion by the Advice of Passion, you must not wonder, if they take Fancy for Revelation, and hug Illusion for Truth.

Eusebius staid a Week with *Eudoxus*, and settled his Judgment. Truth flash'd such a Light on his Understanding, that he admir'd his former Blindness, and thought it more difficult to mistake the true Church, than he did before to find it; he learnt what he was to do, as well as what he was to believe, and resolv'd to square his Thoughts and Actions by the Rule of his Duty: He has kept his Purpose, and at present has the Reputation of an accomplish'd Gentleman, and, what he values most, of a pious Christian. This Providence, which permitted *Theomachus* to fall from a State of Virtue, into a deplorable Habit of Vice, rais'd young *Eudoxus* from the Abyss of Vice, to the Top of Virtue; to teach poor Mortals, that the Sinner must not despair, nor the Saint presume.

Eusebius having brought this great Business to a most happy Conclusion, return'd to *London*, and gave notice to *Theomachus* of his Arrival.

DIALOGUE XIII.

Having settled Eudoxus, Eusebius meets Theomachus, who offers to believe the Existence of a God upon good Reasons, though not mathematically evident.

EUSEBIUS the next Morning gave *Theomachus* a Visit. He found him in the Company of some Gentlemen of his Cabal, whom the Noise of the Dispute had alarm'd; they were concern'd that *Eusebius* had the Face to stand up in Defence of God, to plead so warmly against Atheism, and that after the first *Camiscado* he was returned to beat up their Quarters. *Theomachus* persuaded himself, that the Journey of *Eusebius* was a mere put-off, and that he had really no Business in the Country, but to wave the Conference at London, and so spread abroad his late Engagement, you may be sure to his own Advantage: He flatter'd himself, and others also, that the Dispute was at an End, and being freed from his Enemy, he gave full Liberty to his Tongue, and launch'd out into Panegyrics of his vast Performance, to the Prejudice of Truth and Modesty: The News of *Eusebius's* Arrival damp'd his Hopes, and convinced him, he had rais'd a Trophy before the Victory: He had a mind to engage, nor could he retreat with Honour; but, in fine, he resolv'd upon the Conference, as the less Evil, and invited his Friends to the Skirmish: He received *Eusebius* with Demonstrations of Civility, and was rather prodigal than sparing of Carresses: After many reciprocal Compliments, *Eusebius* address'd himself to *Theomachus*.

Euseb. Sir, at our last Meeting I charg'd *Atheists* with Imprudence, because being uncertain whether there were a God, a Hell, or a Heaven, they lived as if they were certain there were no such Things; you endeavour'd to fence against the Charge, and to plead not guilty; because, though you should take up and model your Life by the Rules of the most severe Morals, this ungrateful Restraint would only serve perchance to lessen your Torments in the next Life, if there be a God,

God, but would never be able to set you in Heaven: For God, said you, requires as an indispensable Homage, not only a well regulated Life, but a stable and undoubted Belief of his Being; the one is of small Advantage without the other; you pretended this steadiness was not in your Power, and asked convincing Reasons to settle and fix your Judgment; I promised you Satisfaction, and am come to keep my Word; but I suppose an Evidence below that of Mathematical Demonstrations will satisfy you.

Theom. The very Question is reflecting, and you must either suspect my Wit or my Judgment to propose it: I know God is neither a *Line*, *Superficies*, nor *Solid*, he comes not within the *Predicament* of a Figure, and therefore lies out of the reach of Mathematics: A Man that will acquiesce to nothing but strict Demonstrations, would do well to disband from Society, to lock up his Reason in his Closet, and only carry it about him on extraordinary Occasions; he may take up with the Sceptics, and doubt of his own Being: No Man can demonstrate by *Euclid*, or *Archimedes*, there is such a City as *Constantinople*, or that there has ever been such an Emperor as *Augustus*; and yet, God be thanked, upon the credible Testimony of those who have seen the one, and of those Authors who have writ of the other, I no more doubt of them, than of this unquestionable Principle, *pars est minor toto*: Some things may possibly be false, though I dare pawn my Life they are not.

Euseb. Your Discourse is reasonable: For were you and I cast upon a desert Island by the stress of Wind and Weather, and should we find in this abandoned Region a stately Palace, built with all Symmetry of Art, we should conclude, it was the Work of an Architect, not of Nature or Chance; nor would it be in our Power to doubt of it; yet it is possible for blind Matter to *rendezvous* itself into a stately *Louvre*; for by a lucky Meeting of Atoms, it may be jumbled and settled in this beautiful and regular Form. A hundred thousand blind Men, (though they set out from all the Parts of the World) may possibly meet together upon *Black-heath*, and draw up in Rank and File; yet should

we see this extraordinary great Army in Battle-array, without the help of Syllogism, we should infer, they were led to the Place, and each conducted to his Station by some, who had better Eyes than they.

I conceive likewise you do not require Physical Demonstrations, *id est*, convincing Proofs drawn from Sense; for God being supposed a Spirit, cannot fall under corporal Sense, and though he should present himself to the Eyes by assuming a Body, the Spectacle might amaze us, but could not give us any rational Assurance, that there is an *infinite Spirit*.

Theom. I ask such Proofs as leave the Understanding satisfied, and fix the Judgment, and remove all prudent Doubt; for such Arguments deserve as firm an Assent, as the most strict Mathematical Demonstrations. I am as sure there is such a Place as *Constantinople*, as that the first Proposition of *Euclid* is true; and doubt no more, but *Cæsar* was, than that I am.

Euseb. 'Tis easy I see to agree in Preliminaries, when the one side proposes nothing but what is just, and the other will receive what is reasonable: You have admitted what neither in Prudence nor Reason you could reject, and I have only asked what I could not omit, without betraying the Interest of Truth, and the Merits of the Cause I have undertaken to defend. Now seeing the Subject is not capable of Mathematical Demonstrations, nor even of Physical Evidence in the State we are, methinks, I apprehend two Ways by which God can manifest his Being to Man: *First*, By an internal Impression stamped with his divine Signate in our Nature, which leads us naturally to the Knowledge of his Existence, as the innate Light of our Understanding shews us the Truth of the first *Principles of Discourse*.

Secondly, By visible Effects, which Reason tells us must be fathered on some Cause, and which without Constraint and Violence, our Understanding cannot attribute to any thing but a Being infinitely powerful, infinitely wise, and infinitely good.

Theom. I agree, these two Ways would be sufficient to settle a reasonable Man in the Belief of a Deity, and that an Atheist would be the most absurd, the
most

most unreasonable Creature in the World, if he required more.

Euseb. Well, Sir, hitherto we have walked hand in hand, our Judgments have been uniform, and I hope our good Intelligence will continue in the following Conference. I will prove you have these very Proofs of his Being, you confess sufficient, and as plain as you could in Reason expect, supposing he were. Let us therefore discuss things in Order, and produce our Proofs in their Turn; when we confound Arguments, we confound Ideas, and only contemplate Truth thro' a Cloud.

DIALOGUE XIV.

The first Proof of a Deity, drawn from the universal Consent of Mankind.

Euseb. **T**HE Notion of a God is so deeply ingrafted in our Minds, that it seems to be twisted and interwoven with our Nature; it is of the same Date with our *Species*, it runs through our Veins with our Blood, and is conveyed to us from our Ancestors; it is neither fixed to Climate, nor Complexion, it takes in all Times, as well as all Places: It is engraven in the Hearts of *Africans*, as well as of the *Asiatics*; the barbarous *Topinbays* of *Brasil* feel the Impression, as well as the most polite *Europeans*; and the very brutish *Hotentots* of the *Cape*, in spite of Savageness, shew they are Men merely by acknowledging a supreme Being; the old *Affyrians* have left Posterity a convincing Testimony they believed a God, because they coined false ones; they had never multiplied Divinities, had they believed there was none, nor paid divine Worship to Statues, had they not been persuaded there was some Being above them, that commanded Homage, because he deserved it.

The *Medes* brought down the *Affyrian* Grandeur, and buried the Empire, together with its Emperor, in a Grave

Grave of Ashes; yet these new Conquerors, who annulled the old Laws, and enacted new ones, who thrust out ancient Customs to make room for others, quarrell'd not with the *Affyrians* about the Belief of a God, they lived in the same Persuasion; *Nebuchodonozor* would needs share worship with his Maker, and so set up his own Statue to receive those Honours which belonged to the supreme Being.

The *Persians*, Successors of the *Median* Greatness, succeeded also in their Belief of a Deity: The conquering *Macedonians* agreed in this Point with the vanquish'd *Indians*; and *Rome* surpass'd all other Nations in Superstition, more than Courage; she built her Greatness upon the Supposition of a Deity, and as some remark, grew so great, because she was so pious: She found the Stamp of a Divinity, wherever she carried her victorious Arms; and the Conquest of foreign Gods, as well as of captive Princes, set off her General's Triumphs. In a Word, the Belief of a Deity reach'd as far as the Plantations of Men; it has never yet been shut out of one City, one Bourg, or perchance one Family: The most barbarous Wretches that ever were, knew there was a Deity, though they mistook in the Application of their Worship. You may almost as soon find a People without Souls, as without a God, that they rather will dedicate an Altar to an unknown Deity, than have none.

The *Englishs*, *Dutch*, *Portuguese*, and *Spaniards*, braving the Fury of the Winds, and the threatening Surges of the enraged Ocean, have discovered a new World in our Days, almost equal to the Old, they have rifled the very Wilderesses, and ransack'd the Mines; wherever they met with the Traces of Men, they fell upon the Footsteps of a God; these Barbarians that lived without Laws, without Houses, without Commerce, were seldom found without Temples; and tho' a savage Education, and more savage Vices had obscured the Notion, they had not the Power to deface it; 'twas legible in the very Night of Idolatry, in the Obscurity of Errors, and some Nations thought 'twas less Absurdity to worship the Devil, than to deny a

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God. Now if you call for Proofs, I can present you a thousand, as strong and satisfactory as the Subject will bear : Past Matters of Fact can only be conveyed down to us by written, or oral Tradition ; and those of our own Time, that lie at a Distance, can only be proved by credible Witnesses ; what I maintain has all these Supports, and by consequence can be questioned only by those, who will be sure of nothing but that they doubt of all Things.

Theom. Whether this be true or false, your Cause will not be much the better, nor mine worse ; yet I must tell you, you are mistaken in your Account : I have read in *Acosta*, and others, that divers People, both in the *East* and *West-Indies*, live as well without a God, as without Houses ; they love nothing but their Ease, and fear nothing but their bordering Enemies : Besides, our *European* Atheists mustered up in one Body, would make a considerable Figure ; and *London* alone, upon an emergent Occasion, can draw out a brisk *Brigade* : I am confident, at least, we exceed you in Quality, if you surpass us in Number, and why may not the one balance the other ?

Euseb. Oh ! I may cry out, with *Seneca*, *Mentiuntur qui dicunt se non sentire Deum, nam etsi tibi affirmant interdium, noctu tamen & soli dubitant* ; “ They lye, who say “ they believe no God, for though by Day in the Hurry of Company, and Heat of Debauch, they may “ profess Atheism ; yet in Darkness and Retirement “ they change their Mind :” Say if you please *no God* is the Wish of *Many*, but the Opinion of *None* : But if some Authors have said so, others equally credible have contradicted them ; yet all agree that those People have more of the Beast, than of the Man ; they wander in Woods, like Tygers, without Commerce, without human Society ; they worry their own Species, and prey upon their nearest Relations ; so that, like Children, though they have Reason, they want the Use of it : They live without Reflection, and consequently without Discourse ; and indeed I do not see why Diseases of the Soul may not untune the Organs of the Brain, as well as those
of

of the Body; why Education and Barbarity may not obstruct the Operations of the Intellect, as well as a Frenzy. The whole Set of *European* Atheists are but a Pack of daring Debauchees, who pride in Infamy, and blush at Modesty: They reason ill, and live worse; they hate Truth no less than Sobriety, and are too insignificant, either to countenance a good Cause, or prejudice it: Their Votes, like Cyphers, without an Unit, make no Number.

But let us face your Atheist with those who believe a God, and we shall find after a general Muster (though you appear also at the Head of the *London* Brigade) an infinite Disproportion. Would it not be true, that all the Citizens of *London* profess the Religion of the Church of *England*, altho' one Presbyterian, or Recusant upon Examen should be found among them? And will you contest this universal Variety, that reasonable Creatures endeavour to defend themselves from the Injuries of Wind and Weather, because some brutish Savages lie under the open Canopy of Heaven without Fence, or a Hut to screen off the Heats of the Summer, or the Cold of the Winter? Yet the Disproportion between you and us is ten times greater, than between one Recusant, and the Citizens of *London*, or between those Men who make Provisions against the Rigour of Seasons, and those who do not: If therefore in one Case, a particular Fact does not prejudice the universal Inference, why must it in the other? *Aristotle* tells us, that some rejected this Principle, *A thing cannot be, and not be at the same time*, and that *Anaxagoras* maintained *Snow is black*; yet, I suppose, if I say the Principle is received by all Mankind, you will not except against my Assertion. I may then conclude, that the Persuasion of a God runs through our whole Species, and spreads as wide as the remotest Colony.

Theom. If I dispute my Ground by Inches, we shall make a long Work of our Conference: Pray go on.

Euseb. Our Difference about the Matter of Fact being at an End, I ask you the Origin of this universal Impression; From whence comes it that this chimerical

Object continually encounters and haunts our Understanding? Why do our Apprehensions rove in another World, and flush the Being of a Deity?

Theom. Some witty Gentlemen will tell you, this Notion came into the World by an accidental Fright; Men started at Thunder, before they knew the Cause of it, and some of greater Wits than their Neighbours improved this pannic Fear into Religion; they persuaded the *Mobile* there was somebody above, that spoke aloud, and breathed forth his Anger in Flames and Smoke: Others with much Probability affirm this Persuasion springs from an innate Fear in the Mind of Man, and a restless Apprehension of the worst that may happen; *Primum in orbe Deos fecit timor*:

Euseb. A Man that will not take Notice of the true Reason of Things, which generally is but one, may forge a hundred false ones; for though one Path leads to Truth, a thousand conduct us into Error. Pray, Sir, seeing Men were first frightened, and then cheated into the Belief of a Deity, of whom did that witty Gentleman borrow the Notion? He was certainly imbued with the Idea of a God, before he could communicate it to his Neighbours. The Cheat was first put on him before he deceived others. Who imposed on him? His Name deserves a considerable Place in History, and I do not see, why our Fore-fathers should have been less careful to conserve his Memory, who slyly brought the Notion of a God into the World, than his who conveyed the *Trojan* Horse into the City, and betrayed it to the *Grecians*: But though you satisfy this *Quære*, the same Question will return, who cozened him? Nor will it cease, till we discover the Origin, or have run you up beyond the first Moment of Time; the only tolerable Escape is to resolve this Fear into Tradition.

But, pray tell me, how you know this Impression *ab immemoriali*, has been handed down from Father to Son; You are Men of Parts, and glory more in Wit than Grace; you generally scorn all Authority but your own, and appeal even from what we call Scripture, to Reason: Back your Assertion with any tolerable Proof,

Proof, and for once I'll take it for Demonstration : All you can say amounts to this, that perchance long ago, some thinking Brain, wrapped up in continual Speculation, blundered upon the Notion, and sent it round ; that it found a kind Reception ; and even since has been kept in Countenance and Reputation ? But it is not strange that one mere Perchance that stands for *no God*, should weigh more with an Atheist, than positive Reason for him ?

This Tradition is of a very ancient Date, and older, in all Probability, than the Invention of Writing ; for aught that you know, it has been from the Beginning ; nay, I may add it's ten times more likely, it sprang up with Man, than that a Man first started the Imposture, and others made it over to Posterity : For the Impression of a God sinks into the Souls, not only of those polite and civilized Nations, who have preserved from Oblivion some Remnants of past Transactions and Books of Records, but even of those who are as ignorant of what passed in the last Age, as of what was done two thousand Years ago, and of those whose Arithmetic goes not beyond their Fingers, nor their Knowledge beyond their own Remembrance. What likelihood then that those who are Strangers to all Tradition, should be so well acquainted with this ?

But to dispatch the first Gentleman ; when the natural Cause of Thunder was discovered, why was not the Cheat unmasked ? Why did not the *Phantom* disappear at the sight of Knowledge, which Ignorance and Error had created ? Were the Understandings of Men so cow'd with the Cheat, that they durst not struggle against it : Or were they so enamoured of their Fears, as to cherish the Object of their Torment ? If this be true, our Ancestors were cast in another Mould than we, they hugg'd what we hate, and doted on what we abhor. If a Man imposes on us by a Surprise, so soon as the Cheat is discovered, we stand upon our Guard, and, like Birds shot at, grow wild : We become cautious and reserved, we stand off in Jealousy and Suspicion : But our tame Ancestors, who were thundered and lightened into the Belief of a God, kept up the Illusion when they had unvizarded the Trick : They

liked, it seems, the Conceit, and were so pleased with Fears and Apprehensions, they resolved to make them immortal.

Theom. These Gentlemen will tell you, Time wore out the Memory of the Imposture, but not the Effects : The Cheat was soon forgot, though the Notion of a God remained ; Education kept this on foot, and continued it to our Time ; and indeed the original Tincture of Education seldom wears out : Though some inbred Principles are impregnable against Education, yet some Customs arise from Education, which Nature itself can hardly deal with.

Euseb. Atheists, when they have lost their other Holds, retreat to Education ; they look upon it as an advantageous Post, and think themselves there, not only out of the Reach of Surprize, but of Assault ; it is their darling Argument, and therefore deserves a peculiar Consideration. I desire you therefore to keep it for a Reserve, at present I have the second Gentleman upon my Hands, and I must do him Right before I leave him. You say, *other Gentlemen affirm, with great Probability, that the Persuasion of a God springs from an innate Fear in the Mind of Man, and a restless Apprehension of the worst that may happen ; and then you prop the Assertion with the Authority of a Poet.* This is in Mr. Hobbs's Phrase ; *Fear of Power invisible, feigned by the Mind, or imagined from Tales publicly told, is Religion.*

This Evasion is liable to great Exceptions ; for supposing Man has an innate Fear, that he is subject to imagine dreadful Things, and apt to scare himself with ghastly Apparitions of his own coining ; yet he cannot fear, unless he frames, or finds the Object that raises this unquiet Passion : What Object can we frame in the Shop of his Apprehensions which has not some Relation to Misfortunes he has either seen or heard of ? Fancy may make strange Combinations, and tie together Things that have no Connexion, yet it must know those Things before it links them together ; for the Apprehension, like the Will, cannot work upon those Materials that lie out of its Fear. When the Streams of the Hypochondry mount up to the Brain, a Man
may

may fancy himself at the last Gasps, though his Pulse beat even, and he enjoys perfect Health, for he has seen others die, and knows he is liable to the same Fate; but the most splenetic Coxcomb in the World cannot fright himself with a Pleurisy, unless he knows there be such a Disease in Nature. The Notion of a God may therefore awaken Man's Fear, but the most timorous Nature cannot tremble at the Apprehension of a God, unless such a Being be known: Seeing therefore the Knowledge of a God precedes his Fear, who stamped on Man the Impression?

Theom. We must take Things as we find them. Man depends originally on himself, he is beholden to no exterior Principle for his Existence, he is as he ever was, and will always be, without any intervening Change: The Notion of Deity, these Gentlemen say, has stuck close to him from Eternity, and in all Probability will jog on with him till the Species fall into nothing; but to what Intent this Fury hovers about him, Doctors have not determined; some, notwithstanding, are inclined to believe, that Nature envious of Man's Happiness, raised this Spirit to cool his Hopes, and sophisticate his Pleasures.

Euseb. Your Gentlemen *Incognito*, who argue by Proxy, triumph without Doubt, and fancy this Answer has made the Business wonderfully clear; but I appeal to the common Sense of Mankind, whether it does not rather start Difficulties, than solve them. I have proved, that Men knew God, before they feared him, and consequently that this Fear could not spring from any innate timorous Disposition, but that it must be ascribed to the great Author of Nature, who has stamped on our Souls the Knowledge of his Being; now your young Gentlemen very confidently tell me, Man was *ab aeterno*, and stands indebted for his Being to nobody but his own Nature, and they thrust on me this fine System, with such an Air of Assurance, as if it were clear beyond Debate, and near allied to the first Principles; whereas, the Thing is not only false, but absurd to Dotage, as I shall make out in its proper Place; but *abyssus abyssum invocat*, one Absurdity ushers

in another; a bad *Thesis* is always supported with weak Proofs.

But, for the present, I admit your *Hypothesis*. *Aristotle* assumes this Aphorism as a Principle, *Natura nihil agit frustra*, Nature does nothing in vain; now whether we cast our View without us, or within us; whether we survey the great World, or the less, we shall subscribe to the Maxim: The natural Inclination of all Things, either tend to the Perfection or Conservation of Individuals, or else to the Beauty and Symmetry of the whole. Sympathies and Antipathies have their proper Stations and Employments; every Being, though never so minute, acts its Part in the great Theatre of the Universe; there are no Mutes in the whole Creation, that appear merely to fill the Stage: Seeing therefore all other Things have their Task cut out for them, and labour in their several Posts, why should this Notion of a God, like a Drone, stand idle without Office, without Employment? Has Nature flung it into the World at Random, as the Ostrich lays her Eggs, and then flies into the Desert? Why should you arraign her Prudence in this Point, who shews her Wisdom in the Management of all Things besides? Ought we not rather to question your Integrity, than her Conduct?

Besides, whether all Things were *ab aeterno* of themselves, or jumbled into Being by a lucky Hit of Chance, and *Legerdemain*, they have at least happened as well, as if an infinite Wisdom and Power had a Hand in the Contrivance; but 'tis most certain, that an infinite Wisdom would never have engrafted in the Minds of Men so vain, so superfluous a Principle, had there been no God in the World; therefore seeing such a Principle runs through the whole Mass of Mankind, we have all the Reason in the World to conclude, *there is no God*.

A Person of Quality in the Company, who measured his Wit by his Estate, would needs come into *Theomachus's* Succour; he thought his Title would add a Lustre to his Arguments, and that he might silence *Eusebius* by Authority, tho' he could not by Reason: Methinks, said he, with Submission to better Judgments, *Theomachus* has overlooked the decisive Solution
of

of the Difficulty, yet I must needs say, he has behaved himself in the Contest like a Man of Parts; he has not shrunk under the Character of a witty and well-spoken Man, but maintained his Reputation; yet oftentimes Warmth and Eagerness let Advantage slip, and we remember not in a Hurry those Arguments that occur, when our Temper is cool and sedate: I do not see why we should have Recourse to accidental or natural Fears, or why we should fetch this Notion from the further end of Eternity; we can reconcile the Difference, and stop the Breach at less Expence of Time and Labour: I am apt to think Education will unriddle the Mystery; we easily take the first Tincture, and when it's well imbibed, it never wears off: The first Rudiments stick so close, that oftentimes they never leave us, and so by a pardonable Mistake, even wise Men ascribe many Things to our Nature, which we owe to the sole Instruction of our Nurse. *Turcism* runs in some Families, *Pobery* in others, and the reformed Religion in mine: Whence comes this Variety but from Education, and a certain Influence of the Climate? Had I been born at *Constantinople*, I had taken the *Turban* instead of a Hat, and Circumcision in place of Baptism; had I *Spain* or *Italy* for my Country, *Popery* would have been my Religion, and in all Probability I should have been as ready to fight for *Clement XIth's* Prerogative of *Primacy*, as I am now to fight against it: Education alone has continued Religions; we are Protestants in *England* now, because our Parents and Governors were so the last Age: The *Turks* have taken their *Alcoran* from their Ancestors, and the present *Papists* Transubstantiation, seven Sacraments, and the Mass, from theirs: Now if our Fore-fathers by Education could infuse into us the Belief of these several Religions, why not that of a God? And if they could, why should we craze our Brain, and exhaust our Spirits in the Pursuit of another Origin?

The Company applauded my Lord's Performance, and some were for petitioning for a higher Patent, for the signal Service he had done the Nation.

Euseb. Under favour, my Lord, this Expedient will not do; nay, those Difficulties I object against *Theoma-*

thus turn upon your Hypothesis with no less Violence than his: For this Notion of a God could not be spread by Education, before it was in the World; it could not be tost from past Ages down to the present, unless it was in past Ages; and if it was, it either was *ab aeterno*, or began in Time: If you say the first, you build the whole Proof on mere Conjecture and Supposition, nor can you make one Tittle of it good, without begging the Question: If you say the second, then either it began with Man, or after him; if with Man, then God who made Man stamped on his Mind this Impression; if it began after him, pray who first sailed into the other World, and made the Discovery of this airy Spectre? Where did he live; and when? Or at least if you are not able to date the Birth of the Nation, shew me when it was not, and I will pay your Argument the same Respect I owe your Person; but I cannot take Words for Reason, nor a proofless Supposition for Evidence: You are the capital Wits of the World; cautious Persons, that will not be imposed on, that on all Occasions call for Evidence.

Besides, according to the Characters of Education, and Nature, the Notion has no Resemblance with Education, but every Line, every Stroke, represents Nature to the Life. We say Self-love, and the Inclination to Pleasure are natural to Man, because we see these two Passions accompany him in all Ages, in all Places, and in all Employments; we love ourselves now as our Ancestors did six thousand Years ago; we pursue Pleasures in 1702, with the same Eagerness our Fore-fathers did in 1000, and even those who acting by more high and divine Motives fly Pleasure, cannot avoid the Inclination: The Desire of Glory, according to all Men, rises also from Nature, because it puts the Thoughts of all Men in a Ferment, it awakens their Industry, and enlivens them for Action; we all love to survive the Grave, and hate that our Name should be nailed up in the Coffin: This Persuasion began with Man, and has continued in his Blood without Variation, without Interruption; it warms old Age, and fires Youth, it assaults the Peasant, it captivates the Prince; those who dare not fetch Glory from the Camp, pursue

it at the Bar, they plead up their Names when they want Resolution to fight them up; in fine, Nature is the same in all Men, it is stable, uniform, permanent; but Education is of another Complexion, 'tis always upon the Change; Time, Interest and Conquest establish new Customs, they set up new Principles of Education, and proclaim new Maxims: The Conquest of *William the First* forced *England* to bow to new Customs, as well as new Masters; it abolished the old Laws, together with the ancient Kings, and our Education became *French* with our Governors: Look where you will, and you'll find Education always followed the Fortune of the State, the Subversion of this was a Prelude to the Establishment of that.

If therefore upon Inquiry we find the Instinct of a God has passed untouched, through all the Revolutions of Times and Empires; if it has bore up against the Fury of the most barbarous Conqueror; what can we conclude, but that it is fixed and rooted in Nature; but that God has stamped this Character of himself upon us, and that it springs not from the Principles of Education? Now I have already demonstrated, that the Notion of a God possessed all Mens Minds from the beginning of Ages; that it has stood immoveable, amidst all the Vicissitudes of Time, and all the Turns of Fortune: Empires have fallen either under the Weight of their own Greatness, or the Fury of the barbarous Conquerors: Nations have left Barbarity to take up Civility, and again abandoned Civility to replunge into Barbarity; they have quitted their old Habitations to seek out new ones, and lost their very Language with their Liberty: One Custom has jostled out another, and Time has wore out that to make room for a third: These strange Revolutions have wrought no Change in the Belief of a Deity; it has survived Empires, and proved more durable than the *Colossus of Rhodes*, or the Temple of *Diana*; neither the Corruption of Nature, nor all the vain Attempts of Atheists, have been able to banish it from one Town, Village, or Family: The Notion of a God has made Mankind in all Ages, and in all Places fall before it, and those Men who dare dispute against him cannot forbear to trem-

tremble. 'Tis then most certain, that either Man has no natural Propension, or that this Impression of a supreme Being is one.

In the mean time, I do not doubt but Education may limit our natural Inclinations, and rather tie them to one Object than another; for though naturally all Men propend to Pleasure, yet what is agreeable to some, is not to others; what touches smoothly my Organ, may grate upon yours. *Domitian* delighted himself with sticking Flies, *Nero* with driving Chariots; some are for *Venus*, others for *Bacchus*: And this confining the universal Principle rises either from Education, or Constitution, or both. Again, though the Desire of Glory be natural and universal, yet Education often assigns the Object; and hence it is, that Punctilio's vary with the Climate; some place their Glory in overcoming an Enemy, others in pardoning him; some judge nothing more glorious than to ride at the Head of an Army, to sack Towns, and drive Desolation before them; whilst others laugh at their Folly, and wrapt up in Speculation, think it more honourable to write of Wars than to wage them: In a Word, *Theomachus*, you perchance persuade yourself nothing can be more illustrious than to defy God, whilst I am satisfied the true Glory of every rational Creature consists in Obedience to his Commands, and Love to his Person: These are the Effects of Education, they vary with the *Meridian*, they become obsolete with Time, and, like Fashions, or Almanacks, grow out of Date.

Let us say the same of God; though the Persuasion of a God be engrafted in Nature, yet Education may contribute to frame different Ideas of him, and to propagate various Worships: Some People fall before a *Crocodile*, others before a *red Cloth*; the *Romans* worshipped Men, and some *Indians* the Devil: When once Ignorance had hatched these monstrous Ideas of God, and Authority had given them Credit, Education spread the Error, and handed it down to Posterity: But the Notion of a Divinity preceded the Infection of Education, and Men believed a Supreme Being and a true God, before they set up the Statues of a false one.

I grant that the different Sects which divide and subdivide Christianity, owe their Propagation to Education; (I mean generally) and what Wonder? For Christianity is a reveal'd Religion, its Myſteries lie above the Reach of Nature, our Underſtanding cannot come at them, God himſelf has been pleas'd to communicate them, he has writ them on Paper, not on our Hearts, and we muſt hear them before we can believe them: Parents take care, either by themſelves, or others, to inſtil into their Children the Principles of thoſe Sects they profeſs, and to chooſe for them a Religion before they can make any Choice for themſelves: Thus moſt Men enter upon their Parents Religions, as they do upon their Eſtates, and reſolve that, which will convey them into an endleſs Miſery or Happineſs, into mere Education: But the Exiſtence of a God is printed in our Nature; we know it without the Help of external Revelation or Preaching; we are our own Scripture, our own Apoſtles.

But do not think I deny Education can have any Part in framing in us the Knowledge of a God; though it be natural for a Mother to love her Children, and for a Child to reſpect his Mother, yet Education concurs, this draws up thoſe reciprocal Duties in more lively Colours, and puts the laſt Hand to the rough Draught of Nature: Juſt ſo is our preſent Controverſy, though Nature leads us to the Knowledge of a God, yet Education haſtens it; this brightens oftentimes the Idea, and poliſhes it with Inſtructions and Precepts: Thus, my Lord, I have returned an Answer to your Objection, and without the leaſt Grain of Præſumption proved, that Atheiſts retreat in vain to Education.

Theom. What you deny to Education cannot be reſuſed to Policy. This Whim of a God was hatched in ſome Cloſet by a ſecret *Juncto* of Stateſmen. It firſt iſſued from the Court, and was probably poſted into the Country by Proclamation; Authority ſent it abroad, Fear kept it Countenance, and at laſt the Stamp of Sovereignty propagated it; the Trick took marvelouſly; the Apprehenſion of a Deity, the Terrors of eternal Pains, with the flattering Allurements of eternal Pleaſure,

Pleasure, awed the Subject into Obedience and Submission; and then these Effects, so beneficial to Government, easily persuaded Princes to cherish the Illusion, and to keep up the Imposture.

Euseb. Good God! That Men should be so wise to deceive themselves! Is the Belief of a God so conducing to the buoying up of human Society; so necessary for the suppressing of Disorders, and the Conservation of a just Subordination? 'Twere then to be wish'd, at least, there were such a Thing; and were I of the great Council of the Nation, I would offer a Bill to both the Houses for the Extirpation of Atheists, who endeavour to deprive the State of so excellent an Instrument of Government. But 'tis strange, that Man, into whose Soul *Nature, Chance, or Necessity*, or what you think to call his originary Cause, have breathed such a Sympathy to Commerce, such an Inclination to Society, should have left him so naked of those Materials that are necessary for carrying on any stable Correspondence, that he is forced to have Recourse to Fiction, to flie to Forgery, and to build the whole Frame of mutual Communications on Cheats, that are the Bane of Society, the Plague of Conversation, the Disturbers of Peace, and declared Enemies to Order.

Secondly, What *Machiavel* first raised this Spirit, that all the Power of Wit pointed with Debauchery, has never been able to conjure down? What great *Nebuchodonozor* reared up this gigantic Statue of a Deity, and then commanded all People and Nations to fall down and worship it? Where did he keep his Court? In what Part of the World did he reign? In what *Olympiad* did he live? A credible Return to these few *Queries* might possibly make some Impression on reasonable Men: But an *Hypothesis* in the Air, that wants the Prop of Proofs, that is sustain'd by mere Conjecture or Possibility, must fall to the Ground: Authority without Reason makes but a lean Figure, and if you intend to win our Faith, first subdue our Understandings.

Thirdly, If the Notion of a Deity be a mere Trick of Statesmen, a fly Invention of Princes; methinks they should not startle at the Monster they only framed to affright

affright others; they may turn their Subject's Fears into Diversion, as well as Profit, and applaud their Cunning for this double Advantage of Obedience and Pleasure; but we see the contrary; Statesmen are no more secure from Throws of Conscience than the *Mechanics*, nor the *Prince* than the *Peasant*; the Terrors of a God often rise with the *Character*; great Men most dread his Justice, because they most offend his Goodness. I ask then, how those who fourb'd others, become Dupes to their own Contrivances? If by *State-Magic* they conjured up this Phantom, why do they tremble at it? Did all the Princes of the World die *intestati*, without making over this great *arcanum Imperii* to their Successors? Were they cut off in one Night as the First-born of *Egypt*? Or did they entomb this grand Secret with their Bodies? A Man that can swallow these Absurdities, rather wants *Hellebore* than Arguments, and I would sooner recommend him to a *Physician* than a *Philosopher*.

Fourthly, That *Hero* of your Faction, the great Mr. *Hobbs*, that able Politician, who wheedled himself first, and then a considerable Part of the Nobility, out of Conscience and Religion too: That *Hobbs*, I say, who has left us a Draught of Government, I mean of Atheistical Policy in *Folio*, who knows as little what he says, as what he believes, crosses upon your System; he rather lays the Knavery at the Subject's Door, than at the Prince's, and affirms point blank the setting up of a God was to drive home Liberty, and to pen up Sovereignty, to countenance Disobedience, and to clip the Wings of Authority: *It is impossible*, says he, *a Commonwealth should stand, where any other but the Sovereign hath a Power of giving greater Reward than Life, and of inflicting greater Punishments than Death; now seeing eternal Life is a greater Reward than the Life present, and eternal Torment a greater Punishment than the Death of Nature, it is a thing worthy to be well considered of all Men, that desire, by obeying Authority, to avoid the Calamities of Confusion and Civil War, and what is meant in Holy Scripture by Life eternal, and Torments eternal; and then he lays before his Reader as fine a Scheme of Life and*
Death

Death eternal, as a Libertine can desire, or an Atheist can invent : According to this Gentleman, those Princes that first set up the Notion of a God upon political Ends, were but puny Statists, they were as unacquainted with their Interest as the Maxims of Ruling, for constituting a superior Power, that could reward more liberally, and punish more severely than they ; they suggested new Pretences of Revolt to their Subjects, and shewed a Secret till then unknown, *viz.* that on Occasions they might war upon their Leaders, not only without Sin, but even with Merit : For in the *Hypothesis* of a God, this Maxim is evident, *God is to be obeyed before Man* ; now Experience teaches us, that Knaves can easily persuade the *Mob*, any Injunction of a Prince that lies a little heavy, is against God, and when once this Frenzy has seiz'd upon the Brains of the Vulgar, they flie to Arms, they flay out of Zeal, they butcher their Fellow-Subjects out of Devotion, and veil the *Prerogative* to *Property*, and the *Crown* to the *Prong* and *Pitch-fork* : These, I suppose, are the Reasons that move Mr. *Hobbs* to caution Princes against Religion, to question the Rewards of Virtue, and the Punishments of Vice : You see how you recede from the Opinion of Mr. *Hobbs*, and leave your *Patriarch* in the Lurch : It's unkind to treat a Gentleman with so little Ceremony, to whom you owe so much ; he first brought *Atheism* into Credit, and, like the Giant in the Fable, first warred openly upon Virtue, and then turned his Fury against Heaven : He modelled you into a kind of Society, who before ranged about the World like the wild *Tarars* or *Arabians*, without Government or Order : 'Twas he first raised Impudence to a Science, Frenzy to Wit, and Infidelity to Religion : From him you borrow your Errors, and even Arms to defend them : Why then will you disoblige a Man to whom your whole Fraternity stands indebted ?

In a Word, the Belief of a Divinity could never be imposed upon Mankind by the Cunning of any Prince or Statesman ; for when one Man attempts to overreach another, he has recourse, without doubt, to Reason ; now I cannot persuade myself that Reason can
invent

invent a Cheat that Reason cannot discover ; for it's evident the Belief of a Supreme Being carries Dread and Terror along with it ; it humbles Pride, checks Lewdness, and curbs the pleasing Sallies of Sensuality ; it prescribes Laws to Interest, and Bounds to Pleasure, it restrains Thoughts no less than Actions ; then how can a Man in his Wits presume, that upon the bare Proposition of the Doctrine, without any serious Examen, without the Recommendation of plausible Arguments, all Men should swallow the Imposture, and vote the Being of God at the Expence of their darling and favourite Prerogative Liberty, of their Quiet and Tranquillity ? Before you can admit so palpable an Absurdity, you must suppose all Mankind flung up their Reason for Company-sake, or run mad to keep up the Frolick : You must suppose our Ancestors were of another *Species* than we, that their Inclinations crossed on ours, they placed their Pleasure not in Enjoyment but Self-denial, their Liberty in Constraint, and their Happiness in Trembling.

But if you say they embraced the Tenets on Grounds fallacious at Bottom, but glazed over with the plausible Varnish of Sophistry and Paralogism ; it's strange that Reason, after a hundred Attempts for the Space of many Ages, has never been able to tear off the Disguise, or to discover the Falacy that was contrived by Reason : And yet it is more astonishing, that the universal Reason of Mankind has been wretchedly ensnared and blinded to so prodigious a Degree, as to take those Proofs for reasonable and solid, which upon the Principles of Atheists were never able to give any rational Account of God's Existence, either by his Effects or Operations : You cannot believe this, unless you believe that Reason itself is unreasonable, or that the Reason of all the World was over-reach'd by that of one crafty Politician. If you dare venture to clap in with this Absurdity, I must confess your Faith is *facile* and *comprehensive* in some Cases, though streight-laced in others ; and you cannot refuse to believe a God, unless you own it's in your Power to believe what is morally impossible, but not what is highly credible. To conclude,

clude, you have unriddled the Secret; it's a mere *State-Engine*, you say, a petty Craft to fright some, and flatter others into Obedience; disband therefore your Fears, run from Conscience, or outgrow it; place Good and Evil on the same Level, for nothing can be Evil below, unless there be a supreme Lawgiver above. A Child will scream out at its Nurse, under the Disguise of a Vizard; but take it off, and he turns the very Object of Fear into Play and Diversion; you have unmask'd the Fourbery, you have discovered the Imposture, why have you less Assurance than a Child; why less Discretion? Why do you still sweat under the Awe of a Deity, and sometimes groan under the Lashes of Conscience? If you have been gulled into these Frights, discourse yourself out of them: Fear and Remorse are not very entertaining: If a Syllogism or two would rid you of these Incumbrances, I would have you try Conclusions: But alas! your own Breast confutes your Pretences, when you affirm the Impression of a God is nothing but a Trick, your Tongue trembles together with your Heart, and like a Criminal at the Bar, you avow the Fact by a faint Denial.

Theom. Your Discourse amounts to this, that no Error can invade and subdue all Mankind: Now can any thing be imagined more universal than Polytheism? Did it not run through all Countries, as well as all Times? Did it not sweep away the Rich with the Poor; the Philosopher with the Illiterate, and the Prince with the Peasant? Through what Gate did this profane Worship creep into the World? If many Gods may be foisted in, why not one? Does the Greatness of the Absurdity facilitate the Imposture? Because a Plurality of Gods shocks Reason more than an Unity, can Reason easier overlook the Contradiction? Does the Cheat lie out of Sight, because a Child may discover it?

Euseb. Polytheism, though it spread wide, was never universal: We know as sure when it was not, and when it begun, as past Transactions can be known: The Memory of things past can only run down to us through the Channel of Tradition; Authors both Sacred and Profane mark its Origin; it takes its *Rise* from the
Tower

Tower of *Babel*, and the first Emperor was metamorphosed into the first Deity : Nor did it infect all People ; some Millions of *Jews* detested the Sacrilege, and there are many probable Conjectures in spite of the *Sorbonne*, that the Worship of one God continued in *China* two thousand Years : But however, since the Birth of Christianity, Polytheism has lost Credit and Empire, it only reigns where Ignorance and Barbarity domineer, and those poor Creatures hug the Cheat who are willing to be deceived.

Moreover, the Philosophers and wise Men of all Ages and Countries receded from the Multitude in this monstrous Veneration : *Plato* confessed he was a *Polytheist* when he spoke in jest, but a *Theist* when he spoke in earnest : *Cicero* rallies the State *Theology*, and drolls upon those Gods in his Books he adored in the *Capitol* : *Seneca* burlesques the Multiplicity of Divinities ; and, in a Word, all the Heathen Divines, as well as Poets, evidently demonstrate, that those believed in many Gods, who follow'd Custom, and those in one who obeyed Reason : So that, though the wise Men were not guilty of the Error, they were of the Sin, because they swam down the Stream with the Vulgar ; they burnt Incense to Stones, offer'd Victims to Statues, and approved in their Actions what they condemn'd in their Judgment.

Nay, if we believe *Tertullian*, the very Multitude in their sudden Frights looked up to Heaven, not the Capitol, and invoked one God, not many : Whence we may draw with him this Inference, that Nature professed one God, whilst Corruption and Ignorance allowed of *thirty thousand* : But besides, in vain you beg universally of the Vulgar ; the Vote of the Multitude separated from the Approbation of the Wise, is no more to be regarded than the Opinion of *Bethlems* ; their Authority can be of no greater Weight than that of Children, who have Reason, but cannot use it : They know as little what they do, as why ; they act by no other Rule than Passion or Custom ; like frightened Sheep, one treads upon the Heels of another, and the Mistake of the first is followed by that of the whole Flock :

Flock: In fine, they judge at random, take things upon trust, and stamp Truth and Falshood with the same Impression; and so leave us no Marks to discover the Imposture.

But again, your Argument is so far from enervating my Discourse, that it confirms it: People had never adored false Gods, had they not been first persuaded there was a true one; as a Picture supposes some real Original, so a counterfeit Excellency supposes a real one: Who would counterfeit *Guineas*, if there be no such Coin? Or cheat the World with false Diamonds, if there were no true ones in Nature? The Heathens ador'd false Gods? I think we may therefore with a great deal of Probability infer, that Nature taught them there was a true one.

Now it's no hard Task to convince a Man that will stoop to Reason, that Polytheism might easily be set on Foot by Craft, Policy, or Corruption, though the Belief of one God could not: *First*, To satisfy the Senses, Men made God *visible*: *Secondly*, To content the Imagination, that could not crowd all the Perfections of God in one Idea, they multiplied the Divinity; then Blindness growing upon them with the Superstition, those things that were intended to represent his Perfections were applied to Men; and then Darkness seized upon them to that Degree, that they deified Diseases, and adored those Obscenities in their Temples, they durst not name in civil Company. *Lastly*, To favour their Passions, and to give full Wing to unreasonable Appetites, they placed Adulterers in Heaven, Strumpets on Altars, and ador'd all Vices, that they might be exempt from the Practice of all Virtues; for who durst condemn what they adored, or punish what they worshipped? What Crime might not be committed at home with Honour and Impunity, that was revered in the Temples with Prostitution and Victims?

But if this Account does not please you, pray attend, and I hope you will receive full Satisfaction. *Polytheism* is a Sin of the deepest Dye, and therefore we cannot imagine Men plunged into the very Depth of Wickedness without previous Dispositions. Crimes,
like

like natural Bodies, do not shoot out in a Moment, but leisurely: *Nemo repente fit pessimus*. Idolatry, like all other monstrous Offences, came upon us by Degrees; first Men carved Statues, then they honoured them, and in fine, ador'd 'em; and as the Cause of making them was various, so that of deifying them was also: A Father, *says the wise Man*, afflicted with untimely Mourning, when he had made the Image of his Child taken away, now honoured him as a God, which was then a dead Man; and some fell into so desperate an Ignorance, as to erect Statues and Altars to those very Persons they mourn'd for; they constituted Ceremonies for the Dead as Cures for the Grief of the Living. *Sacra facta sunt quæ fuerunt assumpta Solatia. Min. Felix.*

In some Places Idolatry sprung from the Pride of Princes, who substituted their Statues to supply their Presence, and commanded their Subjects to pay their Representative the Respect due to their Persons; and this Worship, though civil in its Origin, swelled into Adoration by the servile Flattery of some, and the stupendous Blindness of others; and when once the Gate flew open to Illusion, Idolatry rush'd into the World like a Torrent, and bore down all before it. *Nebuchodonosor* would be adored whilst he lived: *Alexander* obtained Worship of the *Persians*, but could not of his *Macedonians*; these, to set up their Valour, would never own their King was a God; the others deified their Conqueror, to palliate the Shame of their Defeat: The *Roman Cæsars* loved rather to be fear'd while they lived, than ador'd; they would first die before they would be thought immortal; and pretended no Right to Sacrifices till Death cut off all Claim to Government; but then the ignorant Multitude and fawning Magistrate placed their Princes above the Stars, and built Temples to those whom they stabbed in the Senate, or flung into the Common-sewers.

In other Places, Polytheism and Idolatry came from Gratitude; the People dedicated Statues to those famous Men, who first founded their Cities, or improved them, who fram'd Laws, or invented Arts; and in Process of Time, the exterior Marks of Gratitude became Divine

vine Worship: If you doubt of these Occasions, let me recommend to your Perusal *Lactantius*, *Philastrius*, *Artemobius* and *Min. Felix*, and I am confident you will urge no more for Satisfaction: Now if you ask me why the Notion of one God could not be imposed on Mankind by Ignorance, Stupidity, and Custom, as well as Idolatry and Polytheism, I can only desire you to spend a Moment's Reflection on what I have said already.

Theom. I perceive then you will not admit it possible that any Error can be universal: Pray do not balance plain Matter of Fact with Speculation. Did not all the World believe the *Antipodes* impossible? And do not the *Clowns* of all Nations to this Day take the *Moon* or *Sun* to be ten times bigger than the *fixed Stars*?

Euseb. Whether an Error can be universal or no, is not my Concern; though *Aristotle* denies it, and though it can never be made out by any Fact, that such an Error is possible, yet if a Confession will be any Advantage to your Cause, pray take it; however, I maintain, that the Persuasion of a God cannot possibly be such; and I think that the Assertion is made pretty clear already; yet to satisfy Doubts, and to cut off all Reply, I add an Argument, which has all the Appearance of Conviction.

There is a natural Light in Man's Understanding, that never deceives him; but then there is a Prejudice that always does; were we exempt from this, we should seldom be in the Wrong; and were we divested of that, we should never be in the Right; we cannot throw our Mistakes on any in-bred Quality of the Intellect, for then false Judgments would be natural to it, and so we might take up with the Sceptics, and doubt of all things, or rather we should be assured of this alone, that we were always in Error.

There are two Sources of Error, the one exterior, which may be reduced to *Example*, *Education*, and *Sophistry*; these exercise a strange Empire on the Understanding, they impose upon it to Admiration, and almost force it into Error by proposing Objects under false Light: Hence it comes, that Lewdness in hot Countries,

Countries, and Drunkenness in cold, pass for *Peccadillo's*, altho' in themselves they are great Offences: The interior Causes are three, the *Senses*, *Imagination*, and *Passion*, and any of these are able to propose things in borrowed Colours, and represent them to the Understanding quite different from themselves; thus a Star having been represented to us from our Cradle no bigger than a Candle, we have found some Difficulty to be disabused, not being able to reconcile the small Idea we take from our Sense, to that vast one we receive from Reason; our Imagination has been so employed in Matter, that it gives even Spirits its Properties; we are no more able to imagine our Souls without Extension, than a Mountain without a Valley; the Will being engaged by Passion, biases the Understanding, and forcing it to judge true whatever stands for our Advantage, leads us into a thousand Errors; and then it is very hard to discover the Mistake, when 'tis our Interest to be deceived: Now, I say, the universal Belief of a God cannot be ascribed either to the exterior Causes of Error, or to the interior: The first of the Assertion stands firm on those Reasons I have already brought; the second I prove beyond a Possibility of doubting.

The Belief of a Deity cannot with any Colour of Reason be supposed to flow from any of these general Origins of Illusion; if it be rather contrary than conformable to them, if they rather prompt us to believe there is no God, than that there is one; for what Error can spring from those Causes, that have no Proportion to it, that rather stifle than foment it? Now I appeal to Atheists themselves, whether they owe not a great Part of their criminal Incredulity to Sense, Imagination, and Corruption of Heart; they have been so long accustomed to juggle by Sense, that they seem to have lost the Faculty of Reasoning; they reject, as Sophistry or empty Speculation, whatever cannot fall under Sensation; they tell us, they cannot admit God to be the Object of their Faith, because he cannot be that of their Sense; their Imagination is lost in the Survey of his Eternity and Immensity; they cannot frame to them-

themselves any tolerable Idea of his Essence, nor what he did, nor where he was before the World's Creation; and then this *Nonplus* of the Imagination puzzles the Understanding, and so they deny his Being, because they do not conceive his Essence, Attributes and Occupation: In fine the tainted Inclinations that tyrannize over the Heart, level all their Engines against God's Existence, because this Truth curbs their Insolence, and if it does not correct their Irregularity, at least it abates their Violence.

Let therefore all the World, if you please, for many Ages deny the *Antipodes*, let them believe the *first Stars* are no bigger than the Flame of a Taper, or that the Moon equals the Sun; the very *Hypothesis* favours me; this universal Mistake assures me almost above Demonstration, that those who confess a God are not deluded: For six thousand Years the Senses have brought negative Arguments against the Existence of a Divinity. Imagination has conjured up a hundred Difficulties, and thrown as many Prejudices in our way; the extreme Wickedness of most Men has made *no God* their Interest, and it has conquer'd their Desires, and corrupted these Wishes: Yet in spite of Sense, in spite of Imagination, maugre all the Bribes of Sensuality, the Flattery of Appetite, and Violence of Passions, that always raise Doubts in the Face of Evidence, in the Presence of Demonstration, the Belief of a God has stood unshaken, it has subdued the most obdurate, enlightened the most stupid, scared the most profligate, and overcome the most rebellious; all Nations, in all Ages, have acknowledged his Being, and even those who pretend to be Atheists cannot clear themselves of Doubts; their Fears are more certain than their Judgment, and they quake before the *Nothing* they laugh at.

Judge now whether the Belief of a God can be the Effect of Prejudice, seeing it was upon the very Principles of Error, and maintain its Empire over the Judgments of Men, merely because no Prejudice can withstand it. I conclude therefore, this universal Consent, this harmonious Concord of Men in Customs different, opposite in Interest, and almost contrary the one

to the other in Complexion, as well as Features, cannot proceed from any thing but the Conviction of a Truth God breathed into our Souls when he espoused them to our Bodies; he twisted it with our Nature, and so has fenced it against the Assaults of Time, Custom, and Inclination; he has assured it against the false Intelligence of Sense, and the confounding Impression of Imagination: You may as soon debauch the Sun out of the Zodiac, as this indelible Truth out of your Heart, or dispute an *Æthiopian* white, as reason a God into a *Chimera*: No Armour is Proof against the Point of this Truth, there is no Shelter against the Force of this invincible Argument, *Opinionum commenta delet dies, Naturæ judicia confirmat*. Time wears out the Fiction of Opinions, and unmasks the Falsity of ill-founded Persuasions; but then it corroborates the Dictates, confirms the Judgements of Nature; and when a Notion has stood the Trial of all Nations, and indured the Test of all Ages, 'tis a Sign it springs from Nature, not from Caprice or Illusion.

DIALOGUE XV.

From the universal Consent of Nations, it follows, that this Proposition, there is a GOD, can be no more doubtful than this, there was such a Man as Cæsar.

Theom. YOU fancy, I suppose, I am come over to you, and turn'd a thorough-paced Convert; you have ply'd me sufficiently with Words, but not at all with Reasons.

Euseb. 'Tis easier to asperse Truth, than to confute it: When I began the Conference, if you remember, I engaged myself to give you convincing Proofs of a God, but not Wit to understand them: I have done my Part, and if they make no Impression, you must accuse either your Incapacity or Obstinacy, not the Weakness of the Argument. A Man that has no Eyes,

or shuts them, may grope in the Dark at Noon-day, and if he blunders into a Precipice, he must discharge the Sun, and lay his Misfortune on the Indisposition of the Organ, or the Folly of his own Will: I have discovered Truth, and laid it as open as Demonstration will permit, now you very gravely tell me, you can't discern it; you may at the same Rate accuse *Euclid*, and turn his Demonstrations into Paralogisms, you may say *Pythagoras* has shamed human Reason with his famous Discovery, and that he was too liberal when he gave a *Hecatomb* for a Sophism. I tell you again, I have not assaulted your Judgment with Fallacy or Sophism, but with naked Truth: A Child may see it, and no Man of Reason can deny it; it is too evident to be overlooked, and too strong to be withstood; you may as well doubt whether there was such a Prince as *Cæsar*, as call in question the Being of a Deity.

Theom. Hold there: I no more doubt of *Cæsar's* Being, than of my own; it is not in my Power to dissent from either.

Euseb. I suppose you make this public Confession to avoid Singularity, or that some under-hand Design has a greater Stroke in your Confession, than Conviction.

Theom. Nothing but Evidence draws out the Confession, I cannot doubt when Demonstration assures me, and I must waver, if bare Conjectures support me.

Euseb. Pray, by which Proposition of Mathematics do you demonstrate *Cæsar* was?

Theom. You are in a Vein of Bantering surely; past Matters of Fact neither require nor are capable of Mathematical Proofs, they are not to be made out by Signs or Tangents, they stand on the Basis of Authority, and are only conveyed to our Knowledge by Tradition: Now I suppose the joint Consent of all Men, and all Ages, is able to make any past Transaction credible.

Euseb. Your Arithmetic runs too high; what do you talk of all Men? The tenth Part of Mankind has heard less of *Cæsar*, than of *Domingo's* Voyage to the Moon: If you send *Hue and Cry* after this great Conqueror into the Country, nine Parts of ten will take him sooner for a Highwayman, than an Emperor, and
rather

rather suppose he had taken a Purse, than conquered the World : Other Countries of *Europe* are as little acquainted with this Hero as ours : He is absolutely lost to *China* and *Japan* ; his Feats never swarm over into *America*, and his Obscurity even in *Asia* and *Africa* is far greater than his Renown ; his Memory is only confined to Books, it lives among Pedants and School-boys.

Theom. 'Tis true, but the Tradition, though not physically universal, is morally so ; and this suffices to make the Fact certain.

Euseb. Nay, Sir ! I am absolutely for you, and did you not believe there was such a Man as *Cæsar*, I should persuade you to turn *Anchoret*, to take up in Forests, and forswear all human Society ; for in Reality, you will be as ill rigged out for Conversation as *Buffloes* or *Buzzards* ; but then if upon less Grounds you believe there has been such a Man as *Cæsar*, why do you refuse to believe a God upon greater ?

Theom. What ! Do you pretend the Motives that prove a God are more cogent, than those that prove *Cæsar* has been ?

Euseb. I do : For not a tenth Part of the World has ever heard of *Cæsar*, and every Man from the first Origin of Things, I say, every Man that has been able to discourse, to link together Antecedents and Consequences, has confessed there is a supreme Being ; so that if we appeal to Number, and put the Issue of the Controversy to Vote, the Being of a God carries the Day : As there is not Proportion between the Authority that stands for *Cæsar*, and that which stands for God ; so there can be no Comparison between the Certainty of one, and of the other.

Besides, those who attest *Cæsar has been*, had no Interest to deny it ; they got no more by his Being, than by his not Being ; the one did not advance their Fortune, nor the other recoil it : But a considerable Part of those who avouch for a God, were interested in his *not Being*, they were Men sunk in Lewdness, and lost in Debauchery, their Hands were dy'd in Blood, Rapine and Sacrilege, and their Hearts defiled with the

most crying Abominations; they wished there was no God, because they lived as if there was none; their Interest voted him down, yet their Judgments could not. The Rack of their wounded Consciences told them, there was a God; and though they apprehended his Justice, they had not the Boldness to disown it: If therefore those Men deserve more Credit who speak against their own Interests, than those who do not, this single Circumstance makes the Being of God more certain than that of *Cæsar*.

Theom. There is *Excedens* and *Excessum*; if we go to polling, you may perchance gain the Suit, but if to Evidence, the Cause is mine. The Authority of a few built on Evidence weighs ten times more than the Authority of many destitute of Reason. Thus the Case stands between you and me; more witness for God, than for *Cæsar*; but then the Authority of those who maintain a God is supported by Fancy alone and Caprice.

Euseb. That is, all Men espoused the Belief of a God without Reason. What! Can a Man affirm such an amazing Impossibility, and boggle at any thing? A wise Man may sometimes be imposed on by subtle Appearances, he may grasp a Shadow for the Substance, and take counterfeit Reason, as well as adulterate Coin: But to say all Mankind took up the Belief of a God on a Frolic, without Reason, nay, against the Interest of the greater Part, is to suppose them struck at a clap with the Spirit of Folly and Madness; 'tis to suppose them irrational, and by Inference, not Men; and what can Fancy frame more prodigious, than that a Man of Parts should believe this epidemical Lunacy without any Ground or Reason. If *Caprice* has sent about this Frolic; if it has posted it away to every Corner of the habitable World; methinks we have right to expect it may play little Pranks in things of another Nature. Why have the Gentry never yet flung *Tewskury Mustard Balls* into their own Houses, and tossed the Frenzy through the whole Nation? Why have they never conspired the Ruin of Vintners by withdrawing their Custom, or suppressed the *Inns* of Court by com-

posing

posing Law Suits a l'amiable? Could we see Associations carry on these pretty Frolics, we might perchance have some Inclination to think more universal were possible; but till you give me an Instance, you must pardon my Incredulity.

Now 'tis time to take into Consideration your pretended Advantage: The Proofs for *Cæsar's Being* are resolved, say you, into the Evidence of Sense, those for God's Existence are not; therefore the Authority that stands for *Cæsar*, exceeds that which stands for God, in the same Proportion that Certitude, drawn from the Perceptions of Sense, surpasses the Certitude taken from any other Faculty.

First, Supposing the Evidence which stands for *Cæsar* be greater, 'tis false *Logic* to conclude, that the Evidence of a God, grounded on the most universal Consent that ever was in the World, is insufficient to secure a wise Man from Doubt: For certainly something below supreme Evidence will suffice; and if you will not grant me this, it evidently follows, you can be sure of nothing but what you see; for the Experience of your own Eyes is ten times more convincing than that of another, let it be applied to you by the most full Authority that can be imagined.

Secondly, You cannot refuse your Assent to the Existence of a God upon account that the universal Authority of Mankind is not founded on Sensation: For then you undermine and blow up the Foundation of *Atheism*, and apostatize from Incredulity; for either you are an *Epicurean*, or *Aristotelian* Atheist, *id est*, you believe the World was composed by Chance of Atoms, or was *ab æterno*: Take which you please; if the first, pray tell me, did you ever see those *Atoms*? Did you ever view their Motion? Was you present when they danced the Hay; or produced the World by a Turn of *Barnaby*? Did at least either *Epicurus* or *Democritus* assure their Scholars they saw this Scuffle? Can they tell us the Names of their Generals; the Number of their Squadrons, or Battalions? How long the Conflict lasted? And upon what Articles the Peace was agreed on? If the second, I desire to know what ocular Certainty you have of the World's Eternity; could any Man be

present at this strange Production before he was, *id est*, could he exist before Eternity? These Things go down with *Atheists* without chewing, without *Examen*; they believe 'em, though nobody ever saw 'em, and what is yet more admirable, without any Authority to recommend 'em, nay, in spite of Authority, and against the most evident Conviction of Reason; but when the Question is to believe a God upon the universal Consent of all Nations, backed with all the Force of Reason, they beg our Pardon, they cannot captivate their Understanding to the Belief of a thing that has never been seen? Is this to build on *Principles*? Yet, without doubt, you treat *Principles* as the *Presbyterians* did the Government in *Forty-two*, who pretended to settle it on a stable Bottom, yet fairly overturned it.

Thirdly, Did you not tell me, you required such Proofs only for a God as the Matter was capable of? That he must be a Fool or a Madman, that would not believe there was such a Place as *Constantinople*, unless it could be demonstrated by Mathematics; or denied a God, because he did not see him? For to believe the Being of *Constantinople* upon no other Terms than *Demonstration*, or of God upon no Evidence but that of Sense, is to require a Conviction not possible; for God cannot be seen by a corporeal Eye, nor can the Being of *Constantinople* be evidenced by *Euclid*: So that the Authority for a God cannot be enervated, because it is not resolved into Sense: For suppose he did exist, and strived to manifest himself to Mankind, he never could expose his Essence to the Eye, so that you must either say such a corporeal Testimony is not necessary for a thorough Conviction of his Being, or that his Omnipotency cannot sufficiently manifest it; take which you will; that cuts off your Retreat, and this plunges you into the Abyss of Absurdity and Blasphemy.

Fourthly, Though *Cæsar* was the Object of Sense, this Circumstance cannot possibly have any Influence on your Belief: This stands merely on the Basis of Authority; for if I ask you, why you believe there was such a Man as *Cæsar*? You must answer, because *Tully* and others lived and conversed with him: If I inquire farther,

farther, how you know they liv'd and convers'd with him? You must reply, because they say so in their Writings: So that the ultimate Motive of your Belief is their Authority, partly deriv'd to you by their Books, partly by the concurring Testimony of intervening Ages; and this will appear more palpably, if we suppose *Tully* and the rest of those Authors, who tell us they were particularly acquainted with *Cæsar*, in reality never knew him, and so impos'd on the next Age, which propagated the Cheat by a continual Tradition down to our Days: For still in this *Hypothesis* you would believe there was such a Man as *Cæsar*. Why? Because you have the same Authority; so that their seeing *Cæsar*, or not seeing him, has no Influence on your Assent, their Word and Credit alone sways your Judgment.

But, *Lastly*, I say that God hath been both seen and heard, as much as a Spirit can possibly be of those Senses, and so the Authority of a God is not only of a farther Extent than that for *Cæsar*, but it also leans on Reason; and what makes most for our present Purpose, on the *Evidence* and *Conviction* of Sense.

Theom. This indeed is a hardy Undertaking, and worthy of such a *Hero*; if you bring it to a happy Conclusion, you will undermine *Atheism*, or at least confound it. But I doubt of the Success, and I fear your Enterprize will vanish into Miscarriage.

Euseb. For all that, Sir, I do not despond: Your prophetic Enthusiasm will prove in the End as fallible as your Reasons, and you will be as much out of your Prognostication, as your Philosophy.

I will not here insist upon all the Appearances God has been pleas'd to make in this World, since he created it: I single out one, which Infidelity itself must believe: 'Tis recorded in the 19th Chapter of *Exodus*, and happen'd three Months after that miraculous Delivery of the Children of *Israel* from the Servitude of the *Egyptians*. I do not pretend to impose this Book on your Belief as the Word of God; you might then perchance accuse me of your own Faults,

and say I only prove the *Thesis* by begging the Question in Debate: Take it as a Story, and fling it not among the Fables, till you have prov'd it one.

When the Host of *Israel*, says *Moses*, came into the Defart of *Sinai*, it encamp'd in the same Place, just against the Mountain; then God commanded *Moses* to tell the People, that within three Days he would descend upon the Mountain, and talk to the Army: The third Day the Clouds began to gather, Thunder roar'd, Lightning flash'd, and celestial Trumpets struck all the Army with Fear and Amazement; then God came down in the Shape of Fire, and the Mountain open'd a Scene of Terror; the Army trembled, and all the *Jews* sunk under the awing Majesty of their Creator; they heard his Voice, they saw the Flames that environ'd him, they were both dazzled and frighted with his Glory, and so deputed *Moses* to know his Will, and to receive his Commands: He took his Brother *Aaron*, and Seventy-two others, who all saw the God of *Israel*; he trod on a Footstool compos'd of Saphires like a serene Sky. This is in Sublance the Narration of *Moses*, and the Circumstances of this glorious Apparition: It could not be a Trick of State to fright the *Mobile* into Obedience, no subtle Invention contriv'd in a Closet, or resolv'd on at a Counsel-Table; here was no acting under Board, or out of Sight, three Millions of Men were Spectators, and that they might not afterwards take it for a Dream, or suspect it for Illusion, it continu'd many Days; so that they had time for Examen and Criticism.

Now I argue thus; there was, you say, such a Man as *Cæsar*, and you believe it, because that Tradition, which conveys down to you this Truth, is resolv'd into Sense, which cannot be deceiv'd; but a more universal Tradition conveys down to us the Being of a God, and this may be also resolv'd into Sense; therefore the Authority for a God is greater than that for *Cæsar*; therefore, if upon Authority resolv'd into Sense, you believe there was such a Man as *Cæsar*, upon a more universal Authority resolv'd also into Sense, you may and ought to believe there is a God.

Theom.

Theom. I suppose, if there be a God, he is neither Smoak nor Fire; if then those old Gentlemen saw Smoak and Fire only, they could not see God; nay, he is neither made of Sapphires, nor falls under Shape or Figure.

Euseb. What does this Answer prove, but that Atheists use their Reason to abuse it? You cry out for Evidence of Sense, I send you to *Moses* for Satisfaction, you read a Piece of the 19th Chapter, shut the Book, and then with great Coolness tell me, the *Israelites* saw not God, but Fire and Smoak; and 'tis true; but God was under that Fire and Smoak; he has no Organs, yet fram'd a Voice; and how will you have him manifest himself to Sense, but by something that lies within the Sphere of Sense? Alas, Sir, a Spirit is too thin to entertain our Eyes or Ears, 'tis removed out of their Ken; the one fastens on Colours, and the other on Sound, and both bring us Intelligence from Matter: If such Evidence will not satisfy you, all I can say is, Atheists are a stubborn Generation, and nothing but Hell-fire will render them supple; we may pray for them indeed, but cannot hope to convert them.

But, Sir, those Gentlemen who convers'd with *Cæsar*, what did they see?

Theom. What should they see but *Cæsar*?

Euseb. Was *Cæsar* a Substance, or a Complex of Accidents?

Theom. You have left the Pulpit to sit in the Chair of the Scornor; because you cannot reason me into an Impertinence, you will try to laugh me into one. Well, *Cæsar* was a Substance, as we are.

Euseb. I suppose he was neither Colour nor Sound.

Theom. That is certain.

Euseb. And pray what have you ever seen but Colour; or what have you ever heard but Sound? By your own Confession, therefore, *Cæsar* has neither been seen or heard: So that we are still upon pretty equal Terms. I do not say this Comparison runs on all Four, there may be found some Disparity, but it will not invalidate the Retortion: For I find no Difference, but

that those Accidents *Cæsar* appear'd under, were natural to him, whereas those that invested the Divinity were not.

Theom. Pray satisfy a Doubt or two ; the Story is stale, and being to's'd about three thousand Years, probably lost nothing. Again, this strange Passage might be foisted into the Text by a crafty *Rabbi* ; and in Time, what Assurance have you the Fact is true ?

Euseb. First, *The Story is ancient* ; true : But then Antiquity and Truth are not I hope incompatable ; though Pictures may misrepresent by Nearness or Distance, History has no such nice Point as Prospective : If it had, Atheism would lie under no favourable Circumstances, it would have no Play for itself, no, not the Skirmish of Atoms, or the World's eternal Duration : For without doubt, the Battle between these invisible Legions was fought before *Moses's* Days ; and then 'tis pretty clear, Eternity is of a staler Date than *Exodus* : If therefore the Antiquity of the Story startles your Belief, the Relation of the World's Beginning by the fortuitous Coition of Atoms, or its independent Existence from Eternity, puzzles mine : 'Tis ridiculous and unreasonable to except against a Fact or Book, merely because they are ancient ; for if the Exception be receivable, you must fling up all Right to your *Cæsar*, we must shake Hands with *Livy*, giving up *Plutarch*, and confine our Reading as well as Credit to new *Almanacks* or *Gazettes*.

Again, a Fact that has brav'd Time, that has stood the Criticism of four thousand Years, and triumph'd over all the Examens of intervening Ages, carries a certain Air of Truth, that makes Impression on the most obdurate Understanding ; whereas upstart Facts are rather examin'd by Passion than Reason, they are maintain'd and deny'd by opposite Interests ; both sides raise a Dust, and then in the Dark 'tis hard to distinguish Truth from Falshood. The very Story I mention'd has sharpened the Pens and exercis'd the Wits of all Ages ; all those Pagan Philosophers that entered the Lists against Christianity, first struck at the *Pentateuch*, they aim'd at the *Jewish* Law, to wound that
of

of *Jesus Christ* ; but their Attempts were baulk'd, they fell in the Enterprize ; and when they could not disprove the Fact, they blacken'd it, and ascribed that to the Power of Magic which could only be the Effect of the Omnipotent. You have the Liberty to steer by their Example, you may father this Apparition on the Devil, but then what will you gain but Confusion ; For if you admit a Devil directly, you grant a God by Illation ; a Devil and a God are in a manner *Correlatives*.

To the *second* ; if this Apparition might be foisted in by a crafty *Rabbi*, by the same Reason all those Passages in ancient Authors, where *Cæsar* is mention'd, might have been foisted in also ; so that if a bare Possibility has Force against me, it has as much against you : Besides, if we consider the Care the *Jews* took to avoid such Surprises, we may be morally assur'd, no Corruption, no Alteration could possibly be contriv'd : Twelve Copies were taken for the Twelve Tribes, then every Tribe drew as many more, as there were particular Synagogues in each Tribe ; nor was this Task committed to the Care of private Copies, but to Notaries, Scribes, and Overseers appointed by public Authority ; when every Copy was review'd by the whole Congregation, 'twas laid up in the Treasury of the Temple, under divers Locks, nor was it lawful for any without Commission to touch them : Besides, to obviate Falsifications, the Laws of the Land punish'd with present Death those who should dare to add, to diminish, alter, or corrupt the sacred Text : What can secure a Book more against Corruption, than so great a Circumspection, so great a Caution ? Or can you prove that any profane Historian was fenced so strongly against the Assaults of Time ; or the Mistakes of Ignorance or Malice ?

To the *third* ; I have all the Assurance the Fact is true, as the thing is capable of, without a special Revelation : It was not acted in Darkness, but in the Sight of three Millions of Men : This Spectacle mixt with Terror and Majesty, did not flash by, like a Lightning, but continued many Days ; so that the
People

People laid not under a Surprise, but had time to call all things to a cool Examen : Again, this Apparition mov'd them to receive a Law clog'd with Ceremonies, and fill'd with Precepts : We may easily suspect the Presence of their Master rather forc'd them to accept it, than their Inclination, and that they submitted to the Yoak with Regret, because they cast it off in a Moment. Now what three Millions saw and heard, *Moses* committed to Writing ; then he read the whole Law to the People, who swore to obey it : From these Spectators, partly by written Tradition, and partly by oral, we have receiv'd the Fact ; some have defended the Truth of the whole Book with their Blood, and the most learned Men of the World with their Pens. What greater Proof can, not Reason only, but Obstinacy require ? Compare the Certainty you have of *Cæsar*, with the Evidence I have brought for this, and you will find it inferior : Three Millions saw God and heard him, not half that Number had a Sight of *Cæsar*, in all Probability ; and as few ever heard his Voice : The Authority for the one, is at least as great, as that for the other : No Man had any Interest to deny *Cæsar*, a thousand to deny the Books of *Moses*, that have endeavour'd to suppress, and confute them. Emperors have pointed the *Pagan* Arguments with Swords, Racks, and the Horror of most cruel Torments, yet Christians, without Number, have rather expos'd their Bodies to the Flames, than those Books to the Fury of Executioners ; they chose rather to lose their Lives, than deny those Truths they contain'd : Now must not those People be pretty sure, who prove Truths with their Blood ? Who defend Facts, not with a Syllogism, but the Torture ; and press home their Arguments with Suffering ? This way of Dispute perchance may not agree with your Temper, and, I believe, you would rather deliver up your *Cæsar*, than hang for him ; but however, you may measure the Value other Men put on their Lives, by the Price you rate your own at ; and you may conclude, they would never part with them without good Reason, and an urgent Necessity : In fine, we may safely presume the
Fact

Fact is true, because all Antiquity has thought so, and 'tis Madness to oppose our Passion, or reason against the Reason of the Christian World.

Theom. You grant some have question'd those Books, and by consequence the Fact in Controversy; but no body has been so abandon'd of common Sense, as to start a Doubt about the Being of *Cæsar*; therefore if a Fact never question'd be more certain than one that has been controverted, in spite of all your Arguments, 'tis more certain there was such a Man as *Cæsar*, than that God appear'd to the People of *Israel*.

Euseb. The questioning the Fact does not take off from its Certainty; unless the Motives on which it stands be found doubtful and weak upon Trial. Is the Possibility of Motion less certain because *Zeno* deny'd it? Is this Principle, *quid libet est vel non est*, less evident, because some doting Philosophers abjur'd it? Are you tempted to say, Snow is black, because a Fool affirm'd it? No, Sir: In spite of those silly Coxcombs, these things stand still upon their antient Bottom; and will, till Men pull out their Eyes, or turn off their Reason. If the Being of *Cæsar* has never been brought to Examen, 'tis because Mankind has no Interest in him: Whether he was, or was not, brings no Alteration into the World; things go on after the same Method in either Hypothesis: And though indeed he made some Figure eighteen hundred Years ago, he makes none at present, but on the Stage: But should a Gentleman put in Claim to some Estate in Vertue of a Grant from *Julius Cæsar*, our Lawyers would not only plead Prescription against it, but prove by the Statutes even of *William the Third*, his famous Expedition into *Britany* was the pure Invention of *Recusants*, Enemies to the Government; nay, that the very Person is Fiction, Imposture and Design. 'Tis not more certain there was such a Man as *Cæsar*, than that God appear'd to the People of *Israel*.

A Gentleman in some Disorder fetching up a great Sigh: Alas, Sir, said he to *Eusebius*! What do you mean? Why raised you Ghosts from the other World to haunt poor Creatures, and have no Power to conjure

jure them down? Must our Torment make up your Diversion? Can't you be pleased unless we are frightened? Nor at ease unless we groan upon the Torture? The most happy Life deserves rather Pity than Envy; and what we can procure by a thousand Cares, is only to render ourselves less miserable: Why then do Divines continually importune us with strange Discoveries of another World? Why damp they our Pleasure with Stories of Hell, and terrify our Imagination with ghastly Landscapes of a tormenting Eternity? Either prove these amazing Tenets so clearly that we cannot deny them, or promise Silence that we may not hear them. Your Arguments raise Doubts, but cannot quell them; they alarm my Fears, but have not the Power to dissipate them.

Alas! Sir, replied *Eusebius*, what would the Silence of Divines avail, unless you could gag Nature, and silence your Conscience? Though you fly from the Commerce of Men; though you mew yourself up in Rocks and Dens, the very Stones proclaim his Being; the Winds whisper it, and Solitude protests you are within God's Dominion. *Omnes homines vident Deum*; the very Blind see him, and the Deaf hear him.

'Tis strange, answer'd the Gentleman, that so many flashing Wits in the Court and Town should overlook so long this Divinity, which stands before them. Must they put out their Eyes to see him, or turn Fools to find him?

I doubt not, said *Eusebius*, but *Whiteball* and *Kensington* are well stock'd with Wits. I grant the Town is not unprovided; but then I maintain their Blindness proves a God, and that Infidelity is a just Punishment of their Crimes. For make a Survey of all those Wits, and you will find them not only without Grace, but almost without Conscience. So soon as their Reason bloom'd, they prostituted their Innocence, and shew'd they were Men, by acting like Devils. As *Alexander* counted the Battles he fought by the Wounds he received; so these may calculate up the Moments of their Lives by the Enormities they commit: Every Action affronts Nature, and cries aloud for Vengeance. If therefore there be an Author of Nature,

ture, is it not just he should take the Cause of Nature in Hand, and revenge the Injury on those that did it? And what more terrible Revenge can he take, than to strike those blasphemous *Salmoneans*, those impure *Sardanapalus's* as he did the *Sodomites*, with the Spirit of Blindness? *Percussit eos cæcitate à minimo usque ad maximum*: Then to withdraw the Light of his divine Face from their Eyes, and so to permit them to walk in Darkness and Ignorance, and then only to acknowledge their Errors, when they feel the Punishment of their Crimes?

Now that their Infidelity cannot proceed either from want of Motives, or of Wit, 'tis pretty evident. They have the Consent of Mankind, *id est*, of Nature: They have the Confession of their Consciences from within, the Testimony of every Creature from without. These glare such a Light on the most stupid Understanding, that they cannot resist the Force of the Impression. Your *First-rate* Wits of the Court examine, you say, all those Arguments; they contemplate the great World, and the less; they turn up every Stone, and ransack every Corner of the Universe, without being able to discover any Traces of a Deity. What can you infer, but that there is a God above, who takes an Inventory of the Actions of the Children of Men, who punishes their Rapines, their Impurities and Blasphemies here, by confounding their Judgments, who casts such a Gloom over their Understandings, that they can't see what Children discern; that they grope in Darkness, whilst they walk in Light, and call out for Proofs of his Being, whilst they are surrounded, and almost oppressed with Demonstrations? In a Word, Sir, do not conclude there is no God, because the topping Genius's of the Court do not see him; say rather there is one, because they do not see what all the World, both civilized and uncivilized, see and adore; say their Ignorance is a just Punishment of their scandalous and provoking Offences, and that the only way left these abandon'd Debauchees to come to the Knowledge of a God, is to take off the Curse by flying to Repentance.

He

He was going on, but *Theomachus* interrupted him: 'Tis time, said he, to sound a Retreat, we have been this Morning on hot Service. After some Civilies *Eusebius* left the Company, and the next Day took up again the Conference, which continued some Days.

DIALOGUE XVI.

The second Proof drawn from the Existence of the Word, which by unquestionable Authority is shewn to have been made.

Euseb. **I** Have proved the Existence of a God from the innate Characters of his Being, stamp'd on the Hearts of Men; I come now to a second Proof, which he has laid before our Eyes, that he might convince our Senses, as well as our Reason, and manifest himself by his Works to the Incredulous, seeing he cannot appear in Person. We see a most stately Fabric called the World, vast in Extent, and admirable for Beauty: The Earth is stock'd with innumerable Beasts, the Air with Birds, the Sea with Fishes; some seem made merely for Man's Profit, others for his Pleasure, and many for Ostentation. The Firmament glitters with a thousand Luminaries, their Bulk vies with their Lustre, and their Beauty with both: The Sun dazzles us with his Glory, and over-powers our feeble Eyes with an Excess of Majesty; 'tis the grand Arbitrator of Time; it divides Moments into Ages, Years, Months, and Days; it regulates Seasons, prescribes Bounds to Winter, and Limits to Summer; and by its Access and Recess makes 'em. The Moon, with her bright Legions of Stars, that spangle the Firmaments, gilds Darkness, and silvers over those Shades of Horror, and so turns Night itself into a Theatre of Pleasure: But what raises my Amazement is, that this gigantic Machine is compos'd of almost infinite Parts; yet all are so artificially contriv'd, that one fits exactly the other; nay, they are endow'd with contrary Inclinations, they are always at Variance, they

they draw into the Field one against the other, yet those particular Feuds hinder not an universal Peace, nor those private Discords a general Harmony. Now, Sir, I ask you from whence this glorious Piece of Architecture came? Who laid the Foundations of the Earth? Who raised the towering Mountains, and hung those vast resplendent Bodies of the Sun, Moon, and Stars in those liquid Regions above? Who azur'd the Firmament? Who enamel'd the Meadows with a thousand different Flowers, that embalm the Air, ravish the Sky, and perfume the Smell?

Theom. Indeed the World is a lovely Fabric, and the Contrivance seems admirable, so that some have father'd the Work upon an infinite Wisdom: I confess this Opinion is more plausible than true; it goes down with the unthinking Vulgar, yet Men who hate to take things upon Trust, who stick not on outward Appearances, but follow Effects up to their Origin, are of a different Sentiment.

Some say it caused itself; but, methinks, this is a Piece of the rudest Nonsense that ever was invented, it makes a thing act before it was, and gives a Being before it had any; nay, it supposes a thing to be, and not to be, the same Instant; and so allows of a Contradiction, which is to out-shoot Absurdity itself.

Others are inclined to *Epicurus's* and *Democritus's* System; these say the Matter is eternal, which having an infinite Space to support it, began to scour about, and after a thousand Encounters by a most happy Casualty, chop'd upon this regular Frame: Indeed a Man must be of a very credulous Complexion, that can swallow this Folly; 'tis to lose time to enter upon a Confutation: Methinks sometimes we might see Books composed by Chance, as well as this great *Folio* of the World; and Pictures also may start up by sprinkling the Colours at random.

Others, in fine, maintain the World is eternal *à se*, without any other Cause but its own Nature; 'tis a necessary Being, and independent; and as it had no Beginning, so it can never have an End: 'Tis in vain to run after a Cause distinct from its own Nature, it is its own

own Architect and Work, the one is the same with the other. To these Philosophers I give my Approbation, this is my Sentiment; you have Liberty to bring your Exceptions against it.

Euseb. I say the World was made in Time, an infinite Being drew it out of the State of pure Possibility, and placed it in that of Actuality: His Power stretched out the Heavens, and spread a Canopy of Azure, embroider'd with Stars, over the Earth: Wisdom contriv'd the Parts, and with a stupendous Artifice put them together: His Goodness prompted him to communicate himself to a Multitude of Creatures; his Prudence mark'd out the Employment of every Part of the Creation; it assign'd them their Work, and appointed them their Stations. Supposing there was a God, this Account would be very reasonable; for this great Work would not exceed the Skill of the Workman, infinite in Wisdom, Power, and Goodness.

Now the present Controversy can be decided only by two Ways, either by Authority or Reason. If therefore Authority stands by me, and not at all for you; if solid Reason takes my Side, and wholly abandons yours; and if besides you are not only deserted by Reason, but pressed by those very Difficulties, or greater, you oppugn me with, I hope you will be so just to Reason and yourself, as to come over to Truth, and to confess and adore that God you now deny. Let me therefore ask you, is your own Opinion back'd with Authority?

Theom. I confess the Authority is not full nor cogent, yet all Ages have furnish'd Men, who stood up for the World's Eternity: Neither indeed ought we to put the Issue of the Cause upon Authority, in such an endless Series of Ages, many unforeseen and unavoidable Accidents may easily have interrupted the Course of Tradition, as Plagues, and Inundations, which without doubt have more than once almost depeopled the World, and turn'd it into a Solitude: Besides, want of Tradition for the World's Eternity rather proves it was eternal than not: For if the World was always peopled, there could be no common Spring from whence the Tradition

Tradition could first rise, and then spread over the Universe.

Euseb. I grant the World's Eternity may have found Abettors in most Ages, but their Authority is insufficient; there were a certain kind of fanatic Philosophers like our Atheists, who lived on Fancy, and open'd by Imagination; they examined Facts by Caprice, and founded their Tenets on mere Conjectures, but yet their Opinion favours not yours. For though *Aristotle* was a great Stickler for the World's Eternity, and, as he confesses, the first of all Philosophers that broach'd the Whim; yet he acknowledges it was made by God, and flow'd from his Power, as Light from the Sun; yet this *Hypothesis* seem'd so opposite to the received Opinion of all Greece, that an Action of Blasphemy was brought in against him, *Conimb.* l. 8. *Physic.* c. 2. *Quod unum Deum docuisset contra Patrios ritus de Idolis & multitudine Deorum, & quod Mundum sempiternum enunciasset, quem initio Temporis conditum tota Græcia putabat:* And the *Epicureans*, who held the Matter eternal, thought it far more consonant to Reason, to leave the rare Contrivance and Disposition of the World to Chance, which finish'd and put the last Hand to this admirable Architecture in Time, than to ascribe its Origin to any inherent Independency,

*Si nulla fuit Genitalis Origo
Terrarum & Cæli, semperq: æterna fuere,
Cur supra bellum Thebanum & funera Trojæ
Non alias alii quoq; res cecinere Poetæ.*

Thus an *Epicurean* Poet.

And I think I may defy you to produce one ancient Philosopher, one Man of Sense, that ever durst take upon him the Defence of your *Thesis*; and yet we scarcely find any other Absurdity without an Advocate; but to clap Independency on a Being, whose Perfections are confined, seems too monstrous an Enterprize to wise Men, so contrary to the first Principles of Reason, that they durst not undertake it. You do therefore well to put your Cause upon Reason, for you must lose it, if
you

you stand to the Verdict of Tradition : Indeed, as you say, if the World had been eternal, the Memory of its Eternity might have been buried in an endless Series of Revolutions and Successors ; but what does this prove ? Only what might have happened, not what really is to come to pass.

What you say is true, *viz.* that if the World was always peopled, there could not possibly be any common Spring from whence the Tradition should first rise, and therefore no Tradition for the World's Eternity can be expected ; this, I say, though supposed true, can avail you nothing against a positive Tradition that the World was made, and had a Beginning.

Theom. And how do you make it out ?

Euseb. As past Matters of Fact are made out, *viz.* by History : And in the first Place, *Aristotle* quoted above does acknowledge that the most ancient Writers held the World was made, and that Tradition did confirm People in the Persuasion, that God made all things : The *Scythians* and *Egyptians* were of this Opinion, the *Indians* and *Phœnicians* concurred with them ; to say nothing of the *Grecians*, who look'd upon the contrary Opinion as Innovation, nay, and a kind of Heresy, or Blasphemy.

And if we take a Turn into *America*, if we enter the Forests and Wildernesses of this vast Region, we shall find the *Peruvians*, and other *Barbarians*, of this Sentiment : Indeed some had very extravagant Notions of the Creation ; but what can be expected from Men half turn'd Beasts, but Extravagance ? Yet they concurred with us in this, that God fram'd and modell'd the World.

Secondly, The first Historian, and as authentic as ever writ, gives a long Account of the World's Beginning in *Genesis*. I do not intend to put this Book upon you as divinely inspired, give it but the Credit of a *History* ; this I only ask, and this you cannot refuse with Justice, seeing he has been esteem'd by the *Jews* and *Christians* not only as a divine Historian and Legislator, but also as a *Prophet*.

Now

Now supposing the World was created, 'tis natural to think the first Man would leave his Children, and those to their Posterity, a Tradition of so remarkable a Trans-action; nor could this Conveyance be hard, especially when in the World's Nonage, three Men alone, *Methusalem*, *Shem*, and *Isaac*, could carry on a Tradition from the World's Creation almost to the *Israelites* Descent into *Egypt*.

Again, supposing such a Tradition, it might be expected the first Writers should put it on Record. Now this has happen'd; *Moses*, the first Historiographer, has descended to Particulars; and as his Narration is reasonable, so withal it carries a certain Simplicity that persuades. *Berosus*, *Orpheus*, *Homer*, and *Trismegistus* follow'd *Moses* in Age, as also in the Delivery of the World's Beginning: What they received from their Predecessors, they handed down to their Successors, and by this means the Opinion that the World had a Beginning carries all before it: The whole Body of Christians believe it; the *Mahometans* and *Jews*, though they vary from us in other Points, agree with us in this: and all Nations whoever acknowledged a God, own he was the Contriver of this great Master-piece of Power and Wisdom.

Now to go against the Tide of Tradition, so ancient, so universal, and withal so rational, upon no other Ground but mere Conjectures, or bare Possibilities, is Rashness to Excess, and the very Height of Folly; 'tis to prefer the Reason of one Man before that of all Mankind, to brand his whole Species with the Infamy of a fond Credulity, and to pass Judgment upon them, that they are thoroughly qualified for *Bethlem*.

But again, if so full a Report will not satisfy you, you must pen up your Knowledge in a narrow Part of the World, you must forswear not only all Acquaintance with past Actions, but even with remote; and what is worse, you must fall below that Station a Creature endued with Reason ought to keep: For when Reason gives me as great a Satisfaction about the Being, or not Being of a Fact, as Reason requires, 'tis Imprudence to doubt: And a Man must take Pleasure to fret and disoblige

disoblige his Understanding, that will not acquiesce to such an Evidence. Now our present Controversy is a past Matter of Fact: We have put it upon Witnesses: Antiquity stands for me; and all Nations agree in the Main, though they vary in some Circumstances. To these concurrent Testimonies you oppose naked Surmises, or pure Possibilities; or else you *subpæna* a Brace or two of Atheists, or a Pack of *African* and *American* Brutes, who are scarce able to understand the very State of the Question, and know as little of past Transactions as of those that are to come. I now appeal to your own Judgment, whether a full Tradition be not as good a Conviction, that the World had a Beginning, as the Nature of a thing past requires? And whether your Counter-witnesses, who depose on Conjecture, would bias an upright Judge in any Court of Judicature, against a Cloud of others, superior both in Wisdom and Probity.

Besides, I add another Circumstance very material, and which deserves a little Reflection. If the World had been made in Time, by the Power and Wisdom of God, we could not expect a more full Tradition of its Beginning than we have: Therefore, on this very Account, we have all the Reason to presume it had a Beginning. I prove it thus; *First*, It cannot be imagined but some would stand up against it. Mens Judgments are as various as their Faces, and their Understandings seem no less bizarre than their Humours. Some deny things, because every one believes them. They love Singularity in Opinion, as well as in Modes, and will no more endure a Rival in Thinking, than in their Amours. Others are of a martial Complexion, they love to send their Brain upon Expeditions, and are temerarious enough to attack Demonstration. They follow Truth, as Constables do Malefactors, to arrest it, and rail against it, as the young *Athenian* did against *Alcibiades*, because every one applauded him; they idolize Wit, but are ignorant of its Definition, and so, like Dray-men, place it in clashing and contradicting. Others steer their Judgments by the Compass of Interest: One would think their Understandings had truck'd Na-
tures

tures with the Will, and that it had removed its Lodgings from the Head to the Heart. Whatever flatters these Mens Vanity, or pampers their Inclinations, is always true; but if it frowns upon their Passions, or checks their Liberty, it must be false. Hence it comes that those Truth that even flash Conviction, and captivate Reason, the very Moment they are understood, oftentimes find Opposition, and are stigmatized with Fallacy, because too clear to be proved. One would think *that the Part is less than the Whole* is pretty plain, and that a Man must have a slender Portion of Wit, not to conceive it; yet a late Mathematician called it in question, degraded it from the Quality of a Principle, and threw it amongst the Fry of vulgar Errors. 'Tis impossible to frame a Proposition more clear than this, *It's impossible the same should both be, and not be at the same Time.* Yet if we believe *Aristotle*, some Philosophers deny it; and that no Folly might want a Patron, as I have said already, *Zeno* would not admit Motion. Now if Men disbelieve first Principles, if they reject Truth when it appears in *disfhabille*, and overlook it when it stands before them; what Wonder they don't see it at a Distance, when it appears by Proxy, and is conveyed only to us by Tradition? If we will not credit our own Eyes, we may very well slight Authority; for certainly they are able to give a more exact Account of Things than Tradition: They discover Truth in Person; we receive not their Intelligence at second-hand, but see Objects in their proper Colours, without Mask or Varnish. Though therefore the World was made, we could not expect (without a Miracle) a more universal Tradition, than we have of its Beginning.

Secondly, Nor ought the fabulous Opinions about the Creation to prejudice the Truth of the Fact; for supposing it true, those would have sprung necessarily from the gross Ignorance of Barbarians: When a Story has past through two or three Hands, how unlike is it to the Original? Every one shapes it to his own Inclination: Some Circumstances are lost, others added; and nothing remains but the Essential: If a Truth be disguised

guised in a Day, we must not wonder it suffers Alteration in the Space of six thousand Years; especially among those Nations who are ignorant of Letters, who are bred in Ignorance, and live in Brutality, who know no more of Time past, than of foreign Countries, and take as little Pains to cultivate their Understanding, as their Soil.

Theom. But by your Leave I could single you out some Traditions of a very ancient Date, and of far less Consequence than the World's Creation, that pass current without Opposition; for Example, whoever denied there were such Men as *Alexander* or *Cæsar*? Now if the World had a Beginning, why should not the Memory of so wonderful a Fact remain as universal as that of *Cæsar* or *Alexander*?

Euseb. First, If we went to polling, I believe those who stand for the World's Creation would carry it; for this is acknowledged by a hundred Nations, that never hear of those two Princes.

Secondly, If none have endeavour'd to out-face the World, that there never were such Men, 'tis because the Contest was too insignificant; and besides, which way should a Man set upon the Enterprize? He could expect no Relief from Reason. For alas! all the Reason in the World can never shew they were, or were not: He could therefore only have Recourse to Tradition, and where could he find any Pretence to set on foot so much as an *Innuendo* they never were; unless he could hit upon an Expedient to seize all the Records, that mention those Emperors, and then condemn them to the Fire? But it was the Interest of all Atheists to deny the World ever had a Beginning. Nay, 'twas absolutely impossible for them to admit Creation, and reject a Creator; and then that Principle, *ex nihilo nihil fit*, was a great Support, not only to Atheists, but Philosophers; and no doubt, if that Principle be true, the Matter at least may be eternal. Here you see that Interest might move some, and apparent Reason others, to stand for the World's Eternity;—but neither could invite a Man to question either *Alexander* or *Cæsar*.

To sum up therefore the Force of my Argument in short: I say, our Controversy must be tried either by Testimony or Reason, the first is the proper Court for pronouncing upon ancient Facts, and the most uncorrupt Tribunal. I have proved that the Torrent of Tradition runs for me; that the most ancient Writers, as well as the most recent; the most learned, as well as the most pious; the most polish'd Nations, with the most incult, witness for me. Whereas none but a Pack of Atheists, or some wild Barbarians, or at most a Brace of whimsical Philosophers, famous for nothing but Singularity, dare appear in your Defence. If such an Evidence be not sufficient to prove a Fact, pray tell me what is? If you require more, I must conclude you are unreasonable; because you call for a greater Conviction than the Subject will bear, or can be expected without Miracle; and I suppose Miracles would as little befriend your Cause as Tradition.

DIALOGUE XVII.

The Atheist supposing the World's Eternity, supposes an infinite Series of Generations possible; now it being ten times more probable, that such a Series is impossible, he must be guilty of the highest Imprudence to venture his Soul upon such an Uncertainty.

Euseb. **T**HE World, you say, was possible *ab æterno a se*; therefore it was *ab æterno a se*. I affirm it was not possible *ab æterno a se*; therefore it was not *ab æterno a se*. Our Positions are contradictory, and so are our Proofs; for you barely assert and prove Nothing, and I will prove by Reason what I assert.

Theom. Before you proceed, let me desire you not to meddle with *Infinitum*. Though you raise a hundred Batteries against infinite Successions, you'll only go off with Labour and Disappointment. Your Philosophers have undertaken my Defence on that Side, that I know not how you'll storm their Reasons, or level their Authority. Yet, till this be done, there's no coming at

me : Therefore I counsel you not to raise your Battery on that Side.

Euseb. I confess the Pride of some Philosophers, and the litigious Humours of others, have been kind to Atheists : For in Reality, Philosophy is no more a Science, but an Art of Jugling. Philosophers quest more after new Opinions than Truth : And he is the Man, not that searches into the Bowels of Nature, but that dresses and tricks up Notions in the best Posture of Defence against Opposers ; and if he can handsomely embroil a Question, or dares offer Words for a solid Answer, or impeach Truth of Sophistry, he deserves to be pointed at : *Digito monstrari & dicitur hic est.* Thus some have asserted the Possibility of an Infinity *actu*, in spite of receiv'd Principles that oppose it. They shroud the Weakness of their Reasons under the Obscurity of the *Thesis* ; and solve Difficulties by starting greater. You lay hold on their Vanity to support your *Hypothesis*, and think you have made it clear beyond Debate, by telling us Philosophers hold the Eternity of the World possible : But under Favour, though their Authority may stave off some Arguments from you, it cannot others : For though they hold God would create the World *ab aeterno*, they deny it could be *a se*. If therefore in one Case you defer something to their Authority, be so just as to reverence it in the other : Besides, your vast Pretenders to Wit will not be fobb'd off with Authority. This is the Refuge of Weakness ; the Sanctuary of those, whose good Humour must compound for the Shallowness of their Brain. You are for Reason, for naked Demonstration, without Fard or *Fancus* ; for Evidence that admits of no Reply nor Rejoinder ; therefore stand to your Principles before you strike in with these mighty Upholders of *Infinitem*. Bring their Reasons to the Touch-stone ; examine whether they are Sterling, or Adulterate. I will only propose one or two Difficulties, which I confess put me to the Plunge. The World you say is eternal ?

Theom. I do.

Euseb. Therefore it was impossible for you ever to have been born.

Theom.

Theom. I deny the Inference.

Euseb. I prove it. You could not possibly be born till an infinite Number of Generations was past; but 'tis impossible for an infinite Number of Generations to pass, therefore 'twas impossible for you ever to have been born.

Theom. 'Tis impossible for an infinite Number of Generations to pass in an infinite Space of Time; I deny your *Major*: In a finite Space of Time; I grant your *Minor*, and deny the Consequence.

Euseb. I subsume, but 'tis impossible for an infinite Space of Time ever to pass: For if it can pass, it has an End, and by consequence we find an Infinite with an End; and certainly this Consequence becomes not a Man, who avoids the Belief of a Deity, because Infinity is an inconceivable Thing. I know not how you look upon my Argument; but methinks any Man but an Atheist would start at it.

Again, if by Descent we may pass by an infinite Series of Generations, why not by Ascent? Methinks 'tis no farther from the Bottom of a Pair of Stairs to the Top, than from the Top to the Bottom: And I always thought the Way from *London* to *Windsor*, was the same with that from *Windsor* to *London*: Now in ascending from you to your Father, from him to your Grandfather, &c. we march in the same Road, we call in at the same Gentlemen. If therefore by Descent we come to an End of our Journey, why not by Ascent?

Theom. The Reason is evident: For by ascending you come to an end of Generations, and stop at the first Man: Then the Succession of Generations has not been infinite.

Euseb. Right: But then it inevitably follows, there has not been an infinite Series of Generations: Because you put an end to them, they are at a full stop in your Person.

Theom. There is a great Disparity between the two Cases. Because when you mount up from Son to Father, from Father to Grandfather, &c. the Time is always finite. Now what wonder that an Infinity of

Generations can't be trac'd up to their Origin in a finite Space ? But when you descend to me, there has pass'd an infinite Space of Time : And so one Infinity corresponds to the other.

Euseb. No doubt, you have plain'd the Difficulty beyond Dispute by your quaint Disparity. But I would know why a Man by ascending cannot step from Time to Eternity, as well as by descending from Eternity into Time ? And then, how can an infinite Time pass ?

Theom. These Infinities and Eternities are puzzling Subjects, they out-stretch the Abilities of our Understandings, and your Argument presses those Philosophers who maintain God could create the World *ab eterno*.

Euseb. Infinities and Eternities are puzzling Subjects indeed ; but then I wonder an Atheist's Reason should stumble at the Notion of an infinite Being, and leap so nimbly over apparent Contradictions. I do not insist upon my Proof as a Demonstration that there is a first Principle, or that the World was not *a se*. Perchance in a puzzling Subject, our Understanding may be nonplus'd ; but at least it demonstrates, that the whole Body of Atheists is unreasonable to Folly and Madness ; for they reject God on Account of his Infinity, and some other Attributes that they say are inconceivable. In the mean time, they are constrain'd to admit an infinite and eternal Series of Generations ; a thing that not only surpasses our Conception, but in Appearance falls foul on the most evident and receiv'd Maxims of Reason. If we must place Infinity and Eternity somewhere, I appeal to Reason, whether it be not more agreeable to its Dictates, to attribute those Perfections to a Being, in whose Notion they necessarily enter, and imply no other Difficulty, but what follows a finite Understanding, when it roves in Infinity, and loses itself in Eternity ; than to this World, which in its most essential Notion involves no Idea of Eternity : Nay, it cannot be apply'd to it, without violating either directly, or by Illation, the very Principles of Discourse. Whence I conclude
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some more unworthy Principle than Reason induces Atheists to question the Existence of a God, because his most inconceivable Attributes return to their own *Hypothesis* with more Violence.

These Philosophers Case, who think God might have created the World *ab eterno*, is quite different from yours; though their Opinion be false, their Faith is true: So that at worst they risk nothing but their Labour; but you put all your Hopes on a weak Bottom: If my Arguments be true, your Soul is lost; and you will deplore your successive Eternity, *a parte ante*, which has an End for a whole Eternity, *a parte post*, which will have none. Lord! How would an Atheist crow, how would he chirp, if he could but anvil out a Proof so apparently conclusive for the World's Eternity, as mine is against it? We should see the Bookseller's Stalls in *Paul's Church-Yard* hung with *new Demonstrations against the Existence of a God*; as they were some Years ago with *Demonstrations against a Trinity*. We should see Copies in every *Coffee-house*, and the *Beaus* busy in conning it over, to make themselves Masters of it: But because the Proof does not hit with their Inclination, it must not work upon their Understanding. It falls as heavy upon our Philosophers, you say, as upon you; what then? Can Company change the Nature of Things? If they are in the Wrong, are you in the Right? Would you engage your Estate or Life that my Argument is mere *Paraologism*? I believe you would take some time for Consideration before you ventur'd upon the Bet. Why then do you stake your Soul? For if an eternal Succession of Generations be impossible, the World was made in Time. If it was made, there is a God; and if there be one, what can an Atheist expect from a slighted Deity, but a just Chastisement for his Infidelity? The Consequence is of Importance, and deserves some serious Thoughts.

DIALOGUE XVIII.

The third Proof. The Characters of Wisdom visible in the Frame and Constitution of the World, demonstrate it is the Work of a wise Agent.

I Have already prov'd a God by the bare Existence of the World : I confirm the same *Thesis* by the excellent Contrivance of it, which indeed is both amazing and ravishing, It can neither be express'd by Tongue, nor drawn out by Pencil : 'Tis above Art, and out of the Reach of Reason. The most searching Genius that ever was, has not been able to discover one Blot in the large *Volume* of the World ; there are no *Errata's*. Nothing stept in as a rude Essay of Skill, and afterwards underwent the File or Hammer, but all Things continue as they were from the *Beginning of the Creation*.

From this Order and Regularity Tully infers, that the World was the Product of a wise Agent ; and brands those with Folly, who dare deny a Conclusion so clear, so evident : *Esse præstantem aliquam æternamque naturam, eamque suspiciendam adorandamque, pulchritudo mundi, ordoque rerum cælestium cogit confiteri : The Beauty of the World, and exact Order of the Heavens, demonstrate the Existence of a noble and eternal Being, to whom Men owe Esteem and Adoration ;* nay, he sticks not to affirm, that the Contemplation of the Oeconomy, Harmony, and Order of the Heavenly Bodies, put the Matter in a Light, that leaves no room for Dispute. *Quid potest esse tam apertum, tamque perspicuum, cum cælum suspicimus, cælestiaque contemplati sumus, quam aliquod esse numen præstantissimæ mentis, quo hæc regantur ?* What can be imagin'd more clear, than that there is a most wise Being, who directs and governs the Heavens ?

Now that a Vein of Wisdom runs through every part of the World, is most evident ; for it supposes two things, a Design, and Means proportion'd to acquire it ; and where those two are found, Wisdom must be admitted.

admitted. We have Eyes to see, and there are Colours capable of being seen. We have Organs fitted up for *Smell*, *Taste*, and *Feeling*, and there are Objects able to gratify them. *Colours*, *Smells*, &c. would be useless, were there no Senses to receive them; and Senses insignificant, if there was nothing in Nature to play upon them. This reciprocal Relation argues a Design, and a Choice of Means; and who denies it to be the Contrivance of Wisdom, is slenderly provided with this Virtue.

The Sun, which is call'd the Father of Nature, as the Earth is term'd the Mother, moves about us in so just a Distance, that nothing could place it so conveniently but his Wisdom who assign'd its Task. Were it more remote, the Earth would congeal; did it approach, we should be parcht with Heat, and fall into Ashes: But now we enjoy the Benefit of its Light, and the Earth the Effects of its enlivening Influence; it impregnates the Womb of Nature with its Rays, and attracts Vapours to pour them down in Dews and Showers, that refresh the Fields, enliven Flowers, and bring with them Plenty and Abundance; and at the same time returns those Waters to the Rivers and Sea, of whom it borrow'd them; and so (as it were) exercises at once, an act of Liberality and Justice.

But then all those delicious Fruits that charm the Eye, and please the Palate, would rather be admirable than useful, did they not turn into the Substance of Animals; and those (like *Tantalus*) would perish of Hunger in the Arms of Plenty, had they no Instinct to feed on them. But again, had every Creature an Inclination to the same Food, one would starve the other; Nature would be at a *Nonplus* for Provision, her Granaries would be exhausted, her Stock drain'd, and then Mortality would follow: But now she keeps open Table for all her Children, she maintains them at her own Expences: And tho' they neither reap nor sow, they are rather overwhelm'd with Plenty, than press'd with Necessity: Besides, had not the *Male* an Inclination for the *Female*, the Species would be at an End; and this Inclination would not continue them, unless

Propagation were made by it. Had the Female no Tenderness for her young, they could not hold out a Day; yet did not her Teats swell with Milk, her Tenderness could not preserve them; but these poor Creatures forsaken by their Dam would be expos'd to Insult, were they destitute of Swiftneſs, Craft, Courage, or Arms to defend themselves, or annoy the Aggreſſors. Nature has provided againſt this Inconvenience; Flight ſaves ſome, Wiles others, and many diſpute their Lives; and when they are over-power'd, they ſeldom fall without Revenge. They handle their Weapons with Art, and ſence by Rule and Method. The *Porcupines*, like the *Parthians*, fight at a Diſtance; they ſhoot without Bows, or *Arquebuſs*; and hit the Mark without Aim. The *Hedge-Hog* at the Approach of Danger marſhals itſelf into Sphere; it caſts up a Retrenchment; expects the Enemy behind a *Palifade*, and ſupplies with Policy, the Weakneſs of its Forces. The Bull faces his Adverſary. The Horſe wheels off, and uſes his Heels, either to fly, or to wound. If you intended to continue Creatures, could you invent more fit, more apt Means? Were you Commiſſary-General, could you lay up better Proviſions? Are you able to place their Weapons more advantageouſly for their Defence; or teach them to manage them with greater Dexterity? There are more legible Characters of Wiſdom and Fore-ſight in the Republick of Beaſts, than in thoſe of *Lycurgus*, *Solon*, *Plato*, and *Ariſtotle*; for theſe intended a perfect Common-wealth; they err'd moſt ſhamefully in the Means, and enacted Laws more ſuitable to Goats than Men. But among irrational Creatures, as theſe Laws are inviolable, ſo they are proportioned to their Natures and Welfare. They neither err by Exceſs nor Defect, one more Rule would ſubvert Oeconomy, as well as one leſs; nothing can be aded, nothing ſubtracted.

I ſhall not enter upon the Fabrick of their Bodies, where Wiſdom ſits on every Muſcle. Let it ſuffice, that *Galen* takes Notice in his Book *de Forma Fœtus*, that in human Bodies there are above 600 Muſcles: and that every one requires at leaſt ten Qualifications.

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So that about these small Parts alone, no less than 6000 Ends are to be attended to. There are 284 Bones, and each has above forty Ends, in all ten Thousand; and a Failure in any one of these would cause a great Irregularity in the Body, and in many Death and Destruction.

Now not to dilate further upon this Proof, I appeal to you, whether these strange and admirable Contrivances, these natural Tendencies to one Point, and withal, these Means so proportionable, do not cry out, *Ipsæ fecit nos, & non ipsi nos?* We are neither the Work of blind Chance, nor the Product of fatal Necessity, but of an infinite Power and Wisdom. We cannot cast an Eye upon a rough Landskip, but the very Sight of it leads us to a Painter: And if a Tree or Animal in Effigies conducts us naturally to a Hand that drew them, and to Wisdom that contriv'd them; can these living Originals be father'd on Hazard or Necessity?

Theom. These things you mention are worthy of Observation; they entertain sometimes my serious Thoughts, and cast me into Raptures of Admiration; but yet they do not exceed the Force and Energy of Nature.

Euseb. What do you mean by Nature? Is it an intelligent Being; or void of all Sensation and Reason? If intelligent, you misuse Words to confound Notions, you represent God travestied into Nature: If it be deprived of all Knowledge, then you run to Matter and Motion: Now these two are incapable of Wisdom, they can neither think nor understand, they are without Reason, and even without Sense. Notwithstanding the World is invested with plain Characters of Wisdom, they are stamp'd and engraved on each part of the Universe: The Learned and Ignorant, the Vulgar and the Philosophers are unanimous in this Point: What then remains, but that we draw this necessary Inference, that some wise, intelligent, eternal Being did raise out of nothing this lovely Fabrick, that he plac'd every Creature in its proper Station,

prefix'd its End, and provided it with Instruments to compleat the Work Providence has assign'd it.

Theom. You know our Understandings are very short-sighted, they discover nothing plainly but our Ignorance; wherever we look we find ourselves encompass'd with Difficulties; the most trifling, the most common Objects perplex our Reason, we cannot fix a right Notion of Production; if we could, perchance the Mystery would vanish without any Recourse to a first Cause. Your little Tricks of Pass surprize the Ignorant, who often ascribe to Magic those Operations that have no other Cause than slight of Hand. In fine, as Mr. Hobbs takes Notice, the Multitude *deifies what it cannot comprehend. Ignorance begets Admiration, Admiration Respect, Respect Fear, and Fear Religion.*

Euseb. I am glad to see you so low in your own Eyes this Morning, and that your peremptory and dogmatical Humour is spent; surely you have lately made a more intimate Acquaintance with human Nature; and a fuller Discovery of the Imperfections of our Intellect has read you a Lesson of Humility. Indeed our Understandings are poor and unfurnish'd, they come into the World unshap'd, and must be polished by Study, before they can give a tolerable Account of the most obvious Trifles; and yet, when this is done, we cannot rely on their Intelligence, for they have but few Principles to steer by; the Gross of our Knowledge is made of Illations, which are beaten out with great Labour and Attention; and when we contemplate self-evident Truth at a Distance, the Mind is puzzled at the View of some emerging Circumstances; which makes us forget or mistake the Connexion of the Consequence with the Premises, and then our Labour is rewarded with Error.

I willingly therefore grant, that I cannot dive into abstruse Secrets of Nature. I neither know the Mystery of Generation, nor that of Corruption. I believe I am a Compound of two very different Ingredients, Spirit and Matter: But how such disproportion'd things keep so strict a Correspondence, I am as ignorant as the Child unborn. Perchance a Philosopher may ha-

rangue,

range, and talk more plausibly upon the Matter, than an Oyfter-woman : But, after all, if we bring his elaborated Discourse to the Test, we shall find nothing but cant Terms, and scholastical Jargon. But what then ? Cannot I judge that *Paul's Church* never made itself, before I have conn'd over *Vitruvius* ? Or must I know all the Rules of *Limning*, to be sure the Signs in *London* are the Work of a Painter ? Though I cannot conceive which way the *Thames* was turn'd, when the Bridge was built, or when the Arches were form'd of Marble, or Free-stone ; yet I am pretty well convinced, by the Uniformity and Contrivance of the Fabric, that Wisdom and Art had a Hand in the Building : And I would laugh at those who should maintain, that either *Fate*, *Chance*, or *Nature* placed the Stones in that regular Form. A thousand Things in the Universe seem to me mere Riddles ; yet I behold a stately Machine, made up of ten Millions of Pieces : I see Beauty, Symmetry, and Design ; this suffices to persuade a rational Creature nothing but Wisdom contrived it, and nothing but Power put the *Idea* in Execution. So that I infer from what I know, that an infinite Wisdom fram'd and governs the World ; not from what I do not know.

Theom. You must not argue from Works of Art to those of Nature. We see Bridges, Churches, and Pictures made by the Hands of Artificers, and therefore we rationally conclude, that even those that are of an older standing owe their Origin to Art. But who saw the first Stone laid in the Foundation of the World ?

Euseb. You turn your Battery the wrong way, and level at your own Hypothesis as directly as I could wish : Because we see Pictures under the Hand of the Painter, and Edifices under those of Masons and Carpenters, we have reason to infer, that all such things are Effects of an intelligent *Agent* ; but if such Trifles require an understanding Artificer, I would know why the Fabric of the World, compacted of so many Parts, so curiously wrought, so artificially knit together, should not lead us to the same Conclusion ? Have I right to ascribe the raising of a wretched Cabbin to Wisdom, and not the

the whole Frame of the Universe? Must I confess the pretty Proportion of a Leash of Wheels in a Watch is owing to the Skill of a Workman? And that the stupendous Frame of my Body is the pure Object of blind Chance, or fatal Necessity? Certainly such palpable Absurdities would persuade one, that Sense and Reason were not made for Mankind; and that we force Nature when we pretend to it.

D I A L O G U E X I X .

The fourth Proof. The Invention of Arts and Sciences shew the World is not eternal; and consequently that it was made by a powerful Agent.

Euseb. **W**E see new Arts start up with new Ages. The World is now better provided, not only with Fences against Necessity, but even with Supports of Grandeur, than it was two thousand Years ago. The Discovery of the Chart is but of late standing, though of great Importance. The Inventions of Powder, and of the Press, are not much more ancient. *Rerum Natura sacra non simul tradit*: Arts follow the Law of Nature, they are brought forth by Degrees, and are polish'd by Time and Experience.

Other Arts, as they are more necessary to Mankind, so they are more ancient; yet we can track them up to their Origin. We know the Inventors of Husbandry and Tillage, who traffic on foot, and first braved the Ocean in Ships. Now if the World was eternal, the Industry and Study of Man were eternal also. How then is it credible that Men of the same Temper with us, sagacious, witty, and ambitious, should saunter away a whole Eternity, without making those Discoveries we owe wholly to the last six thousand Years? Was the World always a Child, always in its Non-age? Has it only arrived at the Years of Discretion since some few Ages?

Again,

Again, the Desire to perpetuate their Memories runs in the Blood of all Men. We hate to bury our Names in the Grave with our Bodies, to sleep in Dust and Ashes, as unknown to Posterity, as we are to our Predecessors: Nay, some have been so besotted with the Charms of Life at second-hand, that because they wanted Virtues, they presented Posterity with their Vices; and chose rather to be blamed than forgotten. I suppose our Forefathers conveyed down to us their Inclinations, together with their Nature; and that none of their Passions changed in the Voyage, or were improved by Transplantation; their Propensions lean'd the same Way, they were as high mettled, as greedy of vain Applause as we: It cannot therefore be questioned, but that Men so fond of Glory endeavour'd to glut their Appetite, some at the Peril of their Lives, and others of their Quiet. It cannot be thought they either wanted Matter or Occasion: Ambition never sleeps, it stands upon the Catch, and either finds a Subject for Action, or makes one. The Power of a Neighbour, or the Weakness, are both strong Temptations to an ambitious Prince; that promises Glory, this Conquest; and either draws on a War. Pray tell me, therefore, who were those ancient Heroes? Where did they reign? What Province did they waste or subdue? Who raised the first Empire? Who built the second on the Ruins of the first? Was not a whole Eternity able to produce one *Homer*, one *Curtius*, one *Livy*? Did it never come into any King's Head to bribe a Pen, or to buy a Panegyric? Were all the Wits of the World so stubborn, as neither to be moved by Interest nor Applause, to write a News-Letter or Gazette? Indeed I do not wonder we have no exact Diary of past Transactions; for to digest an eternal Story into Days, is a laborious Task, and requires a Purse to buy Materials, as well as a vast Stock of Patience to employ them. But still, methinks, we might reasonably expect some Fragments, or at least the Name of one Prince. But alas! all those *Worthies* lie interred under the Ruins of Time, their brave Exploits sleep with their Persons, and their very Empires are drown'd in Silence and Oblivion.

vion. By the Help of profane Records, we cannot trace Time above the *Theban War*, as *Lucretius* confesses; and therefore *Macrobius* concludes the World could not be eternal. *Quis dubitet quin mundus recens & novus sit, cum Historia Græca bis mille annorum historiam vix contineat? Who doubts but the World is of a short standing, seeing the Grecian Story gives an Account only of two thousand Years?* Perchance you will say, writing is but of late Invention; and that all the memorable Actions of Antiquity perish'd for want of this happy Means of conveying them to Posterity: Where are at least the Painters and Carvers? A Picture, Statue, or Medal, would have given some Satisfaction; or had they rais'd one *Pyramid*, we might at least have an Assurance all Mankind was not drunk with *Opium*, and stupified with an eternal Lethargy: But after all, 'tis strange that so busy, so sharp a Creature as Man, during an infinite Succession of Ages, should not stumble upon the way of Writing, a thing so necessary to the Support of Society, and withal so obvious: That Man was certainly fortunate indeed, who hit upon an Art in some Years, that had escaped the Search of all Mankind for the Space of a whole Eternity.

Theom. The Answer to your Proof is very easy, *tempus edax rerum*, sung the Poet: Time, like *Saturn*, devours its Children: It consumes his own Productions, and preys upon its Offspring. Now if Time be such a Cormorant, Eternity must be a greater. Time, like Distance, diminishes Things; but Eternity swallows them up, and removes them beyond the Sphere of Memory. How many brave Actions within these thousand Years have slipt by the Pens of the most inquisitive Historians? They are wore out of Memory, together with the *Heroes* that atchieved them, and lie entomb'd in Oblivion and Forgetfulness: Nay, Cities not only decay, but vanish. What remains of that famous *Babylon*, but the Name? We know not what it was; and are ignorant even where it stood. And *Florus* confesses, that in his Time, not only *Samnium* was lost, but also its very Ruins. If some few Ages eat out the Memory of noble Exploits, and convey out of
Sight

Sight Cities, together with the Earth they stood on; why do you call for an exact Register of Arts, an eternal Genealogy of Princes, or an Account of their Actions? They are lost in an infinite Succession of Ages; they are drowned in the Ocean of Eternity.

Euseb. By what Misfortune?

Theom. By Deluges and Conflagrations.

Euseb. Pray, Sir, let me ask you to what Office of Intelligence you address yourself for those Deluges, Conflagrations and Wars? Upon what Memorials do you ground the Story of your *Præ adamitical* Transactions? To say there were such things is not to prove it. And what you assert without good Caution, may be denied with Reason.

Theom. Under Favour, methinks my Answer is very much to the Purpose. It attacks not your Proof in the Rear, but in the Front; and strikes at the very Heart of it. You shew the World was not eternal, because it is invested with all the Characters of Novelty. Industry, you say, either improves old Arts, or invents new ones. Some are younger than we; others than our Fathers; and the most ancient have their Origin. Their Inventors are recorded in Story, and come within the Memory of Books: Whence you conclude the World was not eternal, because those Arts must of Necessity have been of more stale Invention. For how can a Man imagine that those things should lie out of Sight for a whole Eternity, which have been discovered in a few Ages? To which I answer, that all this may be very well reconcil'd with the World's Eternity; for they might have been found out an Infinity of Times, and as often lost by accidental Deluges and Conflagrations. Now if by such unforeseen and irremediable Chances, Arts and Sciences might fall into Oblivion, your Argument falls to the Ground; it cannot subsist, and it is of no Force to prove the *Non-eternity* of the World.

Euseb. My Argument is as well-timber'd as ever, and your weak Reason makes me more in love with it: For supposing such Accidents might happen, *i. e.* were possible, by what new-coin'd Logic can you infer they did? Many things may be, that never will be; and he
that

that governs himself by Possibilities, may fear all things, and hope for any thing. Nay, your Possibilities, as I shew'd before, like a two edged Sword, cut both ways, they stand for each Side of the Contradiction, and whilst they take both Parts, advantage neither. For as you say 'twas possible for such Accidents to happen, and therefore conclude they did; so I affirm 'twas possible for them not to happen, therefore infer they did not. My Argument is certainly stronger than yours, for we find by Experience, that fewer things happen that are possible, than do not.

But to close with your Argument, I ask whether those Deluges were particular or universal? A particular Inundation will not do your Business. For supposing the Sea should break its Inclosure, and play such Pranks in our Island, as it did in *Attica*; would the surviving Part of the World replunge into Barbarity and Ignorance? Would the Arts of Writing and Printing disappear in *France*, *Spain*, and *Italy*, because *England* lay under Water? No, no, Sir! The World would jog on. Arts would flourish just as they do. Perchance the greater Sciences of making *Pudding* and *Brawn*, which (as Mr. John Ray takes notice in his *Observations*, are *Dishes proper to England*) might suffer by the Misfortune, yet Industry might retrieve them; for without doubt the Receipts were slipt into *Flanders* with our Armies; and as the *Dutch* taught us besiege Towns, so certainly we instructed them in the deep Mysteries of *Pudding* and *Brawn*.

It follows therefore that those Deluges were universal, (but not supernatural I hope) for then you grant the very thing we contend for, viz. a God. Nor could they be natural; because, according to the present Situation of Things, an universal Deluge caused by the Force of Nature is utterly impossible; and I could easily demonstrate it, did the Strefs of our present Debate depend upon *Hydrostatics*: But if I grant such a Deluge naturally possibly; yet as to the Probability you are never the nearer; for how can any Man in his Senses persuade himself that a thing is probable, or likely to happen, that has never fallen out in an infinite

finite Duration? He that can believe that to be probable, that has never come to pass in an eternal Revolution of Ages, must not be an Enemy to Credulity.

Theom. I never said yet, that an universal Inundation was probable; you have foisted in that Word for your own Advantage.

Euseb. Have you not told me those Deluges have come so very near the Matter, that few escaped? That they have brought Mankind a thousand times within an Ace of its Ruin? The Waters then did cover all the Surface of the Earth; except a small Spot of Ground able to give Footing to half a hundred. Why could they not swell six Feet higher? Who commanded this furious Element to halt in that *critical* Point? If it could rise so high by the Help of natural Causes, why not some Feet higher? And if it could, why did it not in an Eternity? Methinks there should be Spring-deluges, as well as Spring-tides? And in such a Tract of Time it might once at least mount to the highest Pitch. In fine, Sir, I desire you and the whole Sect of Atheistical Philosophers, to produce one Reason that carries the least Shadow of Probability to prove the Waters naturally could swell to the Tops of the highest Mountains, and not cover them; if they could, within the Compass of an Eternity, they had done it: For it seems incredible, that Nature should not do in an infinite Space whatever lay within the Reach of its Power.

But again, it seems strange, that all the ingenious Part of Mankind should be involved in this common Shipwreck, and a small Parcel of illiterate, ignorant, unprofitable Blockheads survive the Fall of Nature: For if a hundred only escaped, 'tis very likely some Mechanics, some Carpenters, some Plowmen, one at least that could write and read, and probably one Taylor might be in this fortunate Company. If so, they might propagate their Arts with their Blood, and repopulate the World in a short time with Trades, as well as with Inhabitants. Now Things have happen'd quite contrary; the World, though stock'd with People, was
many

many Years destitute of Arts; they knew neither the way of Plowing nor Sowing; they could neither plant Vines, nor press Wine, nor turn Milk into Curds, nor those into Cheese. Men lived on the mere Bounty of Nature, Water satisfied their Thirst, and Fruit their Hunger; and for want of the *Post-Office*, every one did his own Message. Nay, they had not the Wit to cover their Nakedness; so that God himself, according to Tradition, cut out the first Cloaths, and from this Moment we may date the Company of *Merchant-Taylors*.

I come to your Conflagrations, which can only concern Books; for they cannot consume Arts, unless first they prey upon Men: And methinks the Fire must have nick'd the Time, that is, set upon all the Houses in the World together, when all Mankind was buried in a profound Sleep, to do the Feat complete. Now I fancy, though Flames should stand upon the Watch for an Eternity, they would never meet with so fair an Occasion to dispatch our Species: But at last they have ravaged Libraries, you say, and glutted their Rage with *Memorials* and *Records*; they not only turn'd Authors themselves into Ashes, but all the *Historical Dictionaries*, together with the *Journals des Scavans*: So that their very Names were consumed with the Paper that preserv'd 'em, and mingled with the Dust we tread on. Your System is too ridiculous to be examined, too foolish to be confuted; Reason has an Antipathy against such Absurdities; they are unable even to work on a Madman. There is no question but Fire may master Libraries, as well as private Houses, and treat them with as little Regard as *Whitehall*; but this will not do your Jobb, to slave *Phænomena's*, we must suppose either that all the Books in the World were wheedled into one Magazine, before the Mine sprung, or that Fire-balls were cast into all the Libraries at a Signal; these two Ways might do a great deal of Execution, and dispatch some Tun of Divinity and History in a short Time; and I conceive they are possible, but to suspect 'em probable, is to impose on our Reason; the very Thought of such a Thing is a Scandal to human Nature, but to believe it, Frenzy and Madness.

DIALOGUE

DIALOGUE XX.

The fifth Proof. 'Tis shewn quasi a priore the World was not eternal a se.

Euseb. I Confess it's more easy to deny than to prove ; the Assailant always attacks at a Disadvantage ; that is not above the Performance of Ignorance or Folly : But this requires both Wit and Study. However, I wave your Advantage, and will draw a Reason or two from the very Nature and Constitution of the World, which I think comes near Conviction, and makes it highly credible it could not possibly be *ab eterno a se*.

If it were eternal, it is a necessary and independent Being ; if necessary and independent, it must be eternal *a parte post*. For as it depends on nothing but itself for its Being, it can depend on nothing distant from itself for its Conservation ; and as its own Nature was sufficient to give it *Existence*, so it is sufficient to continue it ; therefore if its *Existence* was necessary, its Continuation is necessary ; and if this be necessary, it must be eternal. Hence it follows, that if the *Whole* was eternal, its *Parts* must be eternal ; for the *World* is not distinct from all its *Parts* : Therefore, if the *World* was eternal, all its *Parts* were eternal also *a parte ante*, and will be so *a parte post* : But no Part of the *World* is eternal, therefore the *Whole* is not eternal. Let us single out one *Species* : 'Tis evident Men are born, and die ; therefore 'tis evident that Men were not *a parte ante* eternal.

Theom. I wonder you will impose upon the Company ; this is not to reason, but to trifle, and the Proof has more Raillery than Reason. I know I was nothing sixty Years ago, and that within some time I shall return to my everlasting Home. I am not of myself, but the Work of Nature, and must march off when she commands me, nor was there ever any eternal Individual.

Euseb.

Euseb. A little clearer if you please; when you say Man was *eternal*, what do you mean?

Theom. I mean the Species.

Euseb. I understand. Are you then turn'd Platonic, and separate the Species from the Individuals?

Theom. No.

Euseb. Why then methinks it follows, if no Individual was *a se*, the Species was not *a se*, because the Species is indistinct from *all* the Individuals.

Theom. You call in again at *Infinitem*, and forgot it has no *all*. *All* is a Chimera, a kind of philosophical Bull, not applied to a determinate Number.

Euseb. Indeed *Infinitem* has an excellent Situation, like Cities in Boggs, there is no coming at it; but at present it lies out of my way, and I shall draw off without meddling with it. But I must tell you I take a Riddle for a Solution: At least human Species is eternal *a se*.

Theom. I have granted it.

Euseb. Why then it can never be extinct: For what depends of itself must be eternal, and whatever is eternal *a se parte ante*, must be so *a parte post*; unless perchance the Fancy should take a Think to destroy itself, which is unlikely, and impossible to our Hypothesis. For whatsoever exists *a se*, exists necessarily; but what exists necessarily *a se*, must always exist, otherwise it will be necessary, and not necessary, which implies a flat Contradiction.

Theom. Well, supposing this true; what do you infer?

Euseb. That our Species is a Stranger to Eternity, as well as its Individuals, and no more *a se* than you or I: For all those Men who are now in Being must once knock off, and submit to the common Fate of Mortality.

Theom. They must, this is a terrible Truth, but past Debate; methinks I would purchase one Dose of *Æsculapius's* immortal *Possiet-drink*, at any rate.

Euseb. If they died without Issue, our Species would be at an End.

Theom.

Theom. Most true; if they made a Vow of Continence, and kept it, our Race would be short-lived: But I have no great Apprehension that all Mankind will engage in an *Association* to stand by Chastity with their Lives and Fortunes, or to die Batchelors.

Euseb. It's not very likely indeed: So long as there is an Atheist in the World, the Work of Propagation will go on: At least such a Resolution is not impossible; for you and I can make it, and there is the same Reason for every Man in the World: 'Tis therefore possible for the whole Species to perish.

Theom. What then?

Euseb. Why then it follows by an evident Illation, that our *Species* is not *a se*: For whatever is *a se*, must of Necessity be eternal *a parte post*, as it is eternal *a parte ante*. The same Argument takes in any *Species* now existent; whence I conclude, that if no *Species* be eternal, no Part of the World is eternal, nor by consequence the *Whole*.

Theom. Not so fast, if you please: You prove too much; and by consequence nothing.

Euseb. How so?

Theom. Could not God (if there be such a Thing) have created the World *ab æterno*?

Euseb. My Reason tells me he could not: But not to engage in a Matter foreign to our Dispute, I grant he could.

Theom. Let us then suppose he did create it *ab æterno*; in this Case our *Species* would be eternal *a parte ante*.

Euseb. It would.

Theom. Therefore by your Way of demonstrating, it would be eternal *a parte post*; because, according to your new Logic, whatever is eternal one way, must be eternal the other: But I conceive the whole *Species* might be stifled by your general Association, even in this *Hypothesis*, as well as in the other, therefore it evidently follows, that the *Species* of Mankind would be eternal, and not eternal.

Euseb. Sir, you mistake the Force of my Argument. I do not say, whatever is eternal *a parte ante*, must be so *a parte post*: But whatever is eternal *a parte ante a se*, must

must be eternal *a parte post*. I gave you the Reason just now, *viz.* because whatever exists *a se* is independent, and *intrinsically necessary*, and therefore 'tis incapable of Destruction; but whatever is created, depends of its Cause, to whose Power alone it owes its Being; and by consequence is nothing *intrinsically necessary*: It is therefore no more strange, that Things that are by Courtesy, and exist by Benevolence perish, than that Men walk off, and crumble into Dust and Ashes.

Theom. But if we suppose with *Aristotle*, that God is a *necessary Agent*, two Things naturally follow: *First*, That our *Species* was *ab aeterno*; and *Secondly*, That it is *necessary*: Therefore it was necessary *ab aeterno*: For in this Case it could not be *ab aeterno*; yet this being granted, the Difficulty returns upon you; for if you say, our *Species* (in this Supposition) must be *eternal a parte post*, what can hinder me from making the same Reply? If you say, it may perish, therefore it is true, that our *Species* may end, though it be *eternal a se*, independent and necessary.

Euseb. You have cast the Cause upon a palpable Untruth, and beg the Protection of an Absurdity: Howsoever to combat your Opinion more successfully, we'll examine its most plausible Pretences, and see if we can discover the Weakness of them. I say then, this Retreat will not secure you: For till your *Species* remains *intrinsically contingent*, and has no other *Necessity* but that of its Cause; according to its own Nature it may exist or not exist: It has no Perfection inherent, that challenges before *Non-existence*: So that if it be granted, that it did exist necessarily *ab aeterno*, this *Necessity* is merely *extrinsic*; it's nothing but an Imperfection of the Cause, no Perfection of the Effect: Now in this Supposition our *Species* might perish, because it has no intrinsic Virtue that opposes its Destruction; but if it exists *a se*, then Existence is identified with its Nature, and it can no more cease to be, than it could not be: So that no *Hypothesis* can elude an Argument; wherefore I conclude it is evident our *Species* may be extinguished, therefore it is evident it cannot be eternal *a se*. But pray remember what I told you just now,

your

your Argument owes its Force to a palpable Absurdity, and you know such Weapons do small Execution: You suppose God a *necessary Agent*, now the very Supposition destroys him; for Liberty is a Perfection: Seeing therefore God is infinite in Perfection, you cannot suppose him void of Freedom, without supposing him not infinitely perfect, and by consequence *not God*: So that your Discourse runs thus; *If God were God, and not God; if he created necessarily a Species ab æterno, and did not create it; this Species would not be subject to Destruction, and would be subject to Destruction*: This is *cornutum argumentum*, but because it goars with both Horns, it wounds with neither.

Again: If God lay under a Necessity of creating *ab æterno*, why of this World rather than another? If nothing else lies within the reach of his Power, a *finite* Perfection has drained his creative Faculty: His *Omnipotence* is at a Stop, and by consequence his *Infinity* and *Being* at an End: If he can create something else, what determined him to leave all other Creatures in the State of Nothing, and to invest this World with Dignity of Existence? If the Determination came from the Nature of the World, then it required Existence *ab æterno*, and so must have been *ab æterno*, without any Obligation to God for its Being: If from God, then he is free, and the Existence of the World is the Effect of his Liberality, not of Necessity; whence it follows, that every Moment it lies at his Mercy, he may thrust every Individual into Nothing, with the same Freedom and Easiness he drew them out of it.

Some Philosophers, I know, make God a *necessary Agent*, not to suppose him *idle*; they fancy Laziness becomes his Majesty less than Necessity, and because they cannot assign him any other Employment but Creation, they infer he created this World *ab æterno*.

These People come within an Ace of the Extravagance of the Poets, who to cut out some Work for their God *Mercury*, made him a Post-boy: But let us take at present these Dreams for Truths, these Fictions for Content: It follows at least he may destroy this World, upon Condition he'll take the Pains to build another;
nay,

may, he may raise with one Hand, and pull down with the other, for all Eternity: For in this Case it is evident he cannot want Employment, and his Business will equal his Activity: So that to conclude in Spite of the Protection of Absurdity itself, you must confess, that every *Species* that exists is subject to Destruction, and therefore not a *se*.

Theom. Though no *Species* be eternal, Matter may be eternal.

Euseb. What if it be?

Theom. If it be, these different *Species* which grace the World, might spring out of the first Fruitfulness of the Earth, which certainly was more prolific some Ages ago than at present.

Euseb. Ho, Sir! We are out of our way, and just fallen on the Confines of *Democratism*. The last Moment the World was *Ens a se*, and now by the Virtue of some rare Adventure, it is transformed into an *Ens per Accidens*. Seeing you are in a Fit of Fiction, make use of Fancy before it cool, and say Men are hatched in Ovens like Chickens in *Egypt*, or that Beasts spring from Muck, and Men from Parsly-beds. I am almost ashamed to confute Absurdities, so gross at first Sight, so palpable, that no Discourse can make them more apparent: What would the World say, if you advance this Opinion in Print? They ought to look upon you as mad or foolish, if they would do you right: But I admit the wond'rous Fecundity of the Earth, and ask you how it comes to pass the *Species* of Animals are not eternal? For either the Earth possessed this prolific Quality *ab aeterno*, or it did not; if it did not, by what happy Chance did it come by it? If from itself, it must be eternal; if from another, you admit a distinct Agent, and so our Controversy is at an End: If it did possess this prolific Virtue *ab aeterno*, then it produced all things *ab aeterno* (for I suppose Matter is a necessary Agent:) But if this Virtue be eternal, methinks it should still remain, and then we might have the Satisfaction sometimes to breed Horses out of Quagmires, or reap good Crops of Men. If this producing Quality falls with Age, why is it not quite extinct? Why does

does the Earth bring forth *any thing*? An inexhaustible Virtue will run upon the Lees in the Space of an Eternity, and end in Sterility. Thus you see yourself at a Loss, though Matter be eternal; the more you evade a first Agent distinct from the World, the more you encounter him, and you have nothing left but the Liberty of being a Deist or a Fool.

But to give full Satisfaction, I offer you a Reason or two, which seem to conclude, that very Matter cannot be eternal *a se*. First, 'tis evident, of all Beings Matter comes the nearest to Nothing, it has scarce any other Perfection, than that of bare *Existence*, 'tis *pura potentia*, a mere Capacity: Now upon what Right does this abject Thing challenge the glorious Attribute of *Aseity* and *Eternity*? Before we put it in Possession of such transcendent Titles, both Reason and Justice command us to examine its Pretensions: On account of Perfection, it can put in no Claim, for the most vile Insects that creep in Mire, and spring from Corruption, lock up a greater Treasure of Perfections in an Eye alone, than are diffused through the whole Mass of Matter; If therefore neither these, nor even Man himself dares aspire to *Independence* and *Eternity*, why should Matter? To adjudge it these incommunicable Predicates on Account of Imperfection, is very extraordinary: Indeed such a Sentence may argue Compassion or good Nature in a Judge, but not one Grain of Justice: Is Beggary a Title to Greatness; or Peasantry to Nobility? Because I am born a Scavenger, must I challenge a Place at the Council-table; or sue for a Dukedom, because my Family wants a Coat of Arms? Is it not as ridiculous to dignify Matter with *Aseity*, because it borders upon Nothing, as to make it *independent*, because it cannot exist without some Form?

Theom. It is right, Independence is neither founded on Imperfection, nor Perfection, but on its Nature.

Euseb. What do you mean? Is not *Aseity* a Perfection?

Theom. Yes.

Euseb. Therefore the Exigence of *Aseity* founded in Matter must be a Perfection; for certainly to claim a

Perfection as a Debt, not a Gift, is one ; but how do you know this Exigence is founded on the Nature of Matter ? A Gentleman's Word will not pass current amongst Philosophers, as it does amongst Taylors and Vintners : They require Caution, those *ipse dixit* Days expired with old *Pythagoras*, and according to the present Constitution of Mankind, will not revive in our Time : Tell me then, by what mysterious Light have you discovered, that Aseity is entailed on Matter ; that it is a Branch of Birth-right ? I conceive an Assertion may be proved two ways, either by Authority or Reason ; could you *subpæna* a Brace of eternal Witnesses, they might go far to the clearing of the Point in Controversy, but there are few of that Stamp in the Nation ; they are as a reasonable Atheist : Seeing therefore Witnesses cannot relieve you, you must retreat to Reason ; regale us, I beseech you, with a Demonstration.

Theom. We find by Experience, that Matter is not liable to Corruption ; though Compounds rise and fall, it stands immoveable ; it neither loses any thing by Time, nor gains : There was no more a thousand Years ago than to Day, nor will there be less in future Ages, than at present, it therefore will be *eternal*, and if it will be *eternal*, it has been *ab aeterno*.

Euseb. You prove well, that as Matter cannot be corrupted, so it cannot be generated, and by consequence will be eternal ; so far you are in the right : But then it does not follow it was *a se ab aeterno*, because it might have been created ; for the Impossibility of Creation cannot be inferred from any true Principle : Nay, I have proved already, that Matter could not be *a se*, so that your Argument fails to the Ground, and without any Prejudice to the force of my Proof.

Secondly, If Matter be *ens a se*, an *eternal*, *necessary*, and *independent* Being, it is *actus purus*, i. e. it had no Capacity to receive any more Perfections, than those it possessed *ab aeterno* ; for there is no Reason why it should possess one more than another : Therefore *ab aeterno*, it either possessed no Perfection, which destroys the Hypothesis, or *all* : If it had *all*, it cannot receive

any

any more; therefore if it be *eternal a se, necessary* and *independent*, it is *actus purus*, incapable of any further Perfection.

Again, if it be *necessary* and *independent*, it cannot lose any Perfection it had *ab æterno*; because, if it could, that might be, and might not be, and by consequence would not be intrinsically necessary; besides, as it depends on its self alone for its Being, so nothing distinct can possibly destroy it.

Hence it follows, that whatever is *eternal a se, necessary* and *independent*, must be unalterable; for all Change is a Motion, either from a greater Perfection to a less, or from a less to a greater, or at least to an equal: Seeing therefore an *eternal, necessary* and *independent* Being is *actus purus*, incapable either of acquiring or losing any Perfection, it must be *unalterable*.

Hence it follows, that Matter cannot be *eternal, necessary* and *independent*: First, because it is an incomplete Being, and has a natural Tendency to Forms; 'tis, as I may say, out of its Element, in a State of Violence and Longing, until it compasses a perfect Body, and cannot naturally exist without the actual Exercise of that Office: To be therefore a Part is one of Matter's Perfections, because nothing can naturally desire, what is not a natural Perfection: Now I have proved already that no perfect *Species* could be *eternal*, therefore Matter did acquire some new Perfection when those *Species* began, which it had not before; hence it follows, that Matter is neither *actus purus*, nor *unalterable*, because in time it acquired a Perfection which it had not *ab æterno*, and by consequence is not *a se, necessary* and *independent*; therefore it was created by an All-powerfull Agent, which we call God.

Theom. We are bemired in *Aristotle's Materia prima*, and slip into the System of substantial Forms: You would scare me with old Peripateticism, and put off obsolete Dreams for Demonstration: That counterfeit Coin is called in, and only goes current at *Salamanca in Spain*, where Antiquity has the same Charms as Novelty has with us: They stick to old Opinions, as they do to old Fashions, and will no more part with

Aristotle, than the *Chinese* with their Beards : But we have degraded the *Stagirite*. To swear in *verba Magistri*, is an Incroachment upon our Liberty ; in fine, Sir, *Materia prima* is an empty Name, and substantial Forms a groundless Invention ; and your Demonstration is void of all Force, because it relies on Fiction and Vision.

Euseb. I neither declare for *Aristotle* nor *Gassendus*, nor have a greater Inclination for *Des Cartes*, than the *Chymists* : My Proof runs through any Hypothesis, and is calculated up for all Systems. Tell me your Opinion, that I may model my Argument, and point it against your Evasion.

Theom. What we call *Matter*, is nothing but a complex of various simple Bodies *ab æterno* ; they by an innate Quality scower about, and by a mutual Concurrence frame those Compounds that stock the Universe : The Variety only consists in the Diversity of Combinations : When such a Number of *hot, dry, and moist Atoms* cling together, up starts a *Horse* ; the same may be said of Mixts : They differ merely accidentally, and have no other Form (if I may say so) than the *Teleity* of the Mixture ; hence it comes, that *Matter* is not subject to Changes, and is only capable of a new extrinsic Perfection : Besides those Atoms being perfect in themselves, have no Bent or Inclination to compound : They are as content in a State of Separation, as of Composition ; and as willingly form a *Worm* as a *Monarch* : Though therefore *Species* were not *ab æterno a se*, *Matter* enjoined all its natural Perfections *ab æterno*, and is withal unchangeable, unless you call a new Situation, Alteration, &c. So that you must forge a new Demonstration, if you intend to argue *Matter* out of *Aseity*.

Euseb. I suppose you do not expect a Confutation of your System, it lies at present quite out of my Way, and can be no Part of my Task : I discharge my Duty, if I shew, that the *Atomistical Hypothesis* does not weaken the Force of my Reason : Notwithstanding I must tell you, a wise Man will not easily believe, that dull and dead Atoms are able to frame a living Creature : For certainly

certainly Life is something more than the bare Motion of *hot, moist, and dry Atoms*, and an Atheist must have as mean an Opinion of himself as of God, before he can assert, that the only Distinction between him and an Insect, lies in the Difference of the Mixture : Methinks, such an Opinion might dispose him to Modesty : Nay, of all Men, he would be the least presuming, who acknowledges such a base Extraction, and puts no other Difference between him and a Brute, than between *fine Holland* and *Scotch-cloth* : Yet, upon Experiment, these are the great Pretenders of Mankind, who while they confess themselves so near allied to Beasts, adore their Excellencies, and fall down before *Calves*, as the *Jews* did in the Wilderness : Indeed he that wants Leisure or Capacity to examine his Nature, or persuades himself his better Part is immortal, may grow vain upon a kind Presumption, or the real Conviction of such a towering Perfection ; but for a Man to be proud, who pretends to demonstrate his own Baseness, is little less than Frenzy : Now pray attend, Atoms, you say, have an innate Principle of Motion ; Nature, as we find by Experience, always works some End, therefore that Motion of the Atoms has some End ; we cannot discover the Ends better than by the Effects, the Effects are Compounds, therefore the End of that Motion inherent in the Matter is Compound ; hence it follows, what actually constitutes a composed Body, is a Perfection of the Matter, because it is a Possession of the End, to which Nature inclines it ; but it did not possess this End *ab eterno*, therefore *ab eterno* it wanted some Perfection, of which it was capable ; therefore it is alterable, and by consequence not eternal *a se*, besides if it had not all the Perfections *ab eterno*, it possesses them in Time ; it had no Perfections *ab eterno*, because there is no Reason why it should have one, and not all others of which it is capable. Wherefore I conclude it was not *ab eterno a se*, neither will it avail you to reply, these Perfections are accidental ; *first*, because *ens a se* can have no accidental Perfection, for whatever it has is necessary and identified with its Nature ; and *secondly*, because it is *actus purus*, as I said before.

Theom. This is ridiculous to Excess! What if a Ball of Wax was *a se*, could I not mould it into a Cube, not melt it down? You return a Paradox for an Answer.

Euseb. You must not wonder if one Absurdity begets another, a ridiculous Consequence flows from a ridiculous Antecedent; and one Paradox is the best Proof of another. To expect Reason from Nonsense, is to gaze after Impossibilities. If you suppose a Sphere of Wax eternal *a se*, either that Figure was necessary, or it was not; if it was not, who cast it into that Form? Why was it a Sphere rather than a Cube? If it owes the Determination to some exterior Principle, then the Wax was not *a se*, because the Figure was not: If that Figure was necessary, the Nature of the Wax required it; if the Nature of the Wax required it, it can be destroyed no more than the Nature: But if you suppose that Sphere *a se*, the Nature of the Wax cannot possibly be destroyed, therefore neither can the Figure; indeed that Wax would be very stubborn, but Impossibilities are an inflexible Generation, and can no more be brought over to Reason, than Atheists. The World therefore is not eternal *a se*, nor any Part of it; whence it remains, that a most powerful Author drew it out of Nothing, to whom we owe our Being and Conversation, and by consequence Homage.

Theom. Is this all you have to say to the Point?

Euseb. I could enlarge on the Matter; but for the present, I leave the Arguments to your Consideration. We lie under a *Dilemma*; if they hold good, they will stand upon Record against you; if not, against me; which I suppose will be no unacceptable Revenge. You will have the Satisfaction of laughing at the Vanity of the Attempt, and of applauding your Abilities into the Bargain.

DIALOGUE XXI.

The sixth Proof. Though there was a GOD, he cannot convince those Atheists of his Being, who refuse Assent to the foregoing Proofs.

Euseb. I Have worsted you in the Judgment of Authority, and have dispatched Part of your Exceptions: We are come to the last Tribunal of Reason, and if I have the good Fortune to foil you here, our Suit is at an End; and certainly I have all the Grounds in the World to hope a favourable Issue, for Reason never reverses the Sentence of universal Tradition, when backed with a hundred Reasons.

In the first Place; you cannot admit the World to be eternal *a se*, without striking upon a manifest Absurdity; now Absurdities cannot possibly flow from Truth; they are the Children of Falshood, and the Offspring of Error.

Theom. If you can shew that the *Hypothesis* of the World's Eternity leads to any thing that clashes with Reason, or borders upon Error, without doubt I lie at your Mercy: The *Consequence* takes after the *Antecedent*, and 'tis impossible for that to be ridiculous, without this be erroneous.

Euseb. You have granted, That if there be a God, he can manifest his Being to Men, by some sensible Effect of his Omnipotence.

Theom. I have, and a Man must take Pleasure in Folly, and dote on Contradictions, before he can deny a Truth so evident: For to confess an omnipotent Being, and to refuse him the Power of manifesting himself by some exterior Sign to a Creature who is furnished with Senses, and endowed with Reason, is a flat Contradiction.

Euseb. I am glad to hear so ingenuous a Confession: Pray therefore take Notice; if God intended to discover himself by an exterior Sign, he would chuse some stately Work worthy of his Power, and suitable to his Grandeur.

Theom. He would.

Euseb. Let us then suppose for some Moments, that you and I slept in our Beds of pure Possibility; that we are now, what we were a thousand Years ago, very Nothings. Let us suppose besides, that all things else fall into the same State of Impotence; that an infinite Being exists alone, and resolves to communicate his Perfections to some Creatures, and to manifest himself to Man, the most perfect Piece of his Power. Immediately one *Fiat* calls a glorious Fabric from an eternal *Nothing*, uniform in Variety, and various in Uniformity: A Creature dignified with Reason, set off with Senses, and enriched with a hundred noble Qualities, marches at the Head of this new-born Multitude: He admires at the stately Architecture of the infant World, the Multiplicity of Parts, the stupendous Contrivance and Harmony of the whole: Can he, or his Posterity by the Force of Reason come to the Knowledge of the Deity that made it? According to your Principles they cannot: For though we suppose this new-framed World a thousand Times more perfect than that we live in, they may conclude it was eternal, as now you do, and they have a better Plea, because we suppose it more perfect. 'Tis true, the first Man knows he is not eternal, but of what Standing the World is, or how it comes to be, is a Mystery: He may ascribe his good Luck to Chance, or his own Nature, as well as you; but if we come to his Descendants, they will be at a puzzle for the Original of their Genealogy: They can arrive at the Knowledge of it, either by Tradition or Reason; and if by either, or both these Means they can be ascertained they had a Beginning, why are not you assured we had one? For which way shall they meet with a more diffusive Tradition, or more pregnant Arguments than we have for the Beginning of this World? If the Structure of the new-supposed World be admirable to Amazement, that of the old is surprizing: If there appear in the Constitution of that, as many Characters of Wisdom and Power, as Parts, the very Blind may read as many in the Frame of this; that may open us a Perspective of Miracles,

racles, and this unfolds a Scene of Wonders : If therefore in spite of Tradition and Reason, in spite of the most visible Characters of Wisdom and Power ; in fine, maugre as many Wonders as there are Objects without us, or Veins, Muscles and Arteries within us, Atheists deny this World had any other Author than its own Necessity and Independency ; why may not the Atheists of the new World elude the Force of Tradition and Reason by your wretched Evasion ? They may certainly entrench themselves in the *Hypothesis* of Eternity, and out-face, by your Example, downright Demonstration.

Theom. Tho' indeed these new Gentlemen would be at a *Nonplus*, as well as we ; and I believe that would vie Incredulity with this, yet God might manifest himself many Ways : *First*, By infusing into all Men as clear a Conviction of his Being, as we have of the first Principles of Reason : *Secondly*, By teaching them some Demonstration, that he created the World, which lies out of Sight : And *Thirdly*, By divine Revelation. These Methods are very feasible, and I fancy would do the Business.

Euseb. *First*, All those Ways are supernatural : Now 'tis very strange that Omnipotence should want Power to frame a Work capable to point out to a rational Creature its divine Contriver, without the Assistance of Miracles : But again, tho' God should infuse into all those Inhabitants of the new World, as clear a Knowledge of their Origin, as of the first Principles, do you think all Debates would vanish at the Approach of that glaring Light ? Have not Men deny'd the Truth of these great Principles in spite of Conviction, altho' they had no other Temptation to be foolish, but the Pleasure of contradicting ? And why should you expect in your Case a more reasonable Procedure ? Especially when the omnipotent Motives of Lewdness and Epicurism, that debauch your Understanding, would corrupt and bribe theirs : For they may oppose against Demonstration these Arguments which support your Obstinacy, and buoy up your Infidelity. I cannot conceive how it is possible for an infinite Mercy, and

an infinite Justice to meet in the same Subject, how Justice can pardon, or Mercy punish ; therefore, there is no such Thing.

To say something can be made of nothing, is to cross upon Reason ; to build new Principles upon the Ruin of the old, and by consequence to break down the Inclosure between Sophistry and Demonstration, Truth and Falshood ; therefore *the World was not created* : Nay, 'twas possible to be *ab eterno*, therefore *it was*. What Evidence can be secure from the Attempts of these Arguments ? They dare attack *Euclid*, and huff *Apollonius* : If resolute Denials pass content for Proofs, and Possibilities for Demonstrations, we pass all things on Courtesy. A Man that dares look a Fool in the Face, may do strange Execution ; he may deny us into Nothing, and by the sly Turn of a Possibility demonstrate us out of Being.

Theom. Nay, a Man that is resolv'd to push Folly home, may puzzle a fix form Philosopher, yet the Defeat of the one, will prove more glorious than the Victory of the other ; but then I thought Evidence carried all before it, and captivated more Understandings than the Grand Seignior has enslav'd Christians.

Euseb. Evidence indeed is generally victorious, but oftentimes 'tis over-match'd : A Man seconded by Prejudice or Interest, stands immoveable ; you must change his Circumstances before he will alter his Opinion : His Understanding never changes Sides, unless Interest marches off first ; but when this wheels about, that follows through a thousand Errors. The Sun has Beams enough, not only to fill, but even to dazzle a well-dispos'd Eye ; but if a Film crosses the Pupil, or a Cataract interposes between the Crystal, in spite of Light the Organ remains in Obscurity, and the Patient finds the Effects of Night, and the Horror of Darkness at Mid-day : Thus the Cause stands with the Understanding. I grant those People we talk of would have Proofs sufficient to content a well-disposed Understanding, and so have you ; but if they are haunted with the Spirit of Dispute and Obstinacy, if Interest
stands

stands against Creation and God, the Intellect falls presently into Disorder, Mists arise, and Fumes interpose ; and when 'tis thus dismounted, Evidence, by a kind of *Antiparistasis* produces Obstinacy, not Conviction, and rather hardens the Heart than softens the Brain.

Your second Means is expos'd to the same Exceptions : I do not question but God can draw a Legion of Demonstrations from the Constitution of the World to evince he made it, which are not within the reach of our Knowledge : Yet if the New-found-World Atheists are of the same Temper with those of our Horizon, they will dispute their Ground, and never surrender, till the Fire of Hell acts upon Sense, and so conveys Truth into the Understanding by eternal Sufferings : For as you (against the common Vote of Mankind, against the plain Conviction of Reason) cast Creation out of Doors, both as needless and impossible, what hinders them from following your Foot-steps, and opposing to all Demonstrations these groundless Conjectures, that support your Incredulity ? If you say a Man that dares fly in the Face of Evidence is a Monster, that he ought rather to be caned than argu'd into Reason, you are in the right ; but these Monsters over-run the World, they are grown so common, that they rather please than astonish ; for now an inflexible Obstinacy, and a mighty Wit are become synonymous, and 'tis far more warrantable and modish to stand close to Interest, than to yield to the Force of Reason.

I cannot guess why Revelation would prove more effectual than Demonstration ; these inwards Lights are always accompany'd with some Absurdity ; and though they illuminate, they leave us in the dark : And unwary Man may easily be deluded, he may mistake Temptation for Inspiration, and the Voice of God for the Spirit of Fornication. We remember yet what mad Pranks our Fathers saw the last Age, when People rebell'd by divine Impulse, and executed their Prince on a Scaffold by Revelation ; when they bled their Fellow-Subjects Purfes, and then their Veins, by
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the Command of the Spirit ; when they transgress'd God's Laws by Providence, and those of Nature by Inspiration : And as Men fanatically inclin'd, take every Impulse of Passion for divine Revelation ; so they who love Libertinism look upon Revelation itself as an Illusion, they will admit of nothing Divine, but Sensuality, they examine Truth by the Standard of Pleasure, and whatever baulks Appetite is Spleen and Vision : One would think the Revelation of the World's Creation made so many thousand Years ago to *Moses*, is certain almost to Evidence ; it has undergone the Examen of Ages, and the *Criticism* of obstinate Incredulity, it has triumph'd over Ignorance, conquer'd Malice, and sham'd those it could not convince ; I do not see how a particular Revelation can be more persuasive than that which has been put a thousand Times to the Test ; nor how this can force an Understanding against the Biass of Interest, that will not come over to the other : For still you may run to your old Retrenchment, *The World was possible ab æterno*, therefore *it was ab æterno ; id est*, you may take begging the Question for proving, and Impudence for Reason.

Theom. What think you, if God should take you and me by the Hair, as you fancy an Angel did *Habakkuk*, and post us away to the imaginary Spaces above the Empyreum ? If he should appear in his Majesty, and regale our Sight with a Scene of Creation ?

Euseb. Why, I think you would be amazed, but not convinc'd ; you mounted an Atheist, and would return one.

Theom. That's strange !

Euseb. 'Tis so indeed ; yet not more strange, than that after so many Proofs of a Divinity, you remain in Infidelity : For if God did appear, he must borrow some sensible Shape ; human Eyes are too feeble to gaze upon a Spirit : The Glory of a Divinity dazzles them ; they sink under the Splendor of the Omnipotent. Now, he has appear'd already under the Form of Fire and Smoak to a whole Army, not able to bear his Majesty, and this Appearance is made so credible, that

that he who will not believe so many thousand Eyes, must be a Fool to believe two : Again, how do you know but this World eternally floated (like a swimming Island) in the vast Ocean of those imaginary Spaces ; and by a lucky Puff of Chance, or Storm of Atoms, was waisted over to you in the Nick of Time ? These Casualties are, I hope, possible : Besides, that unlucky Principle, *ex nihilo nihil fit*, might gravel your Understanding above, as now it does below, for Situation makes no Alteration in Truth or Falshood ; if it be evident here, it will be evident there ; and if it appear Sophistry in the new World, why should it pass for Demonstration in the old ? But if this should chance to work upon you, your Fellow-Atheists would be where they are, unless God should fall upon new Creations, and cure their Infidelity by condescending to their Pride, and satisfying their Curiosity : But then you would condemn him to a Drudgery more insupportable than that of looking after Flies. He must, it seems, work, if not for his Living, at least for Adoration : He must fawn on Atheists to deserve their Protection, and serve an Apprenticeship to be acknowledged for their Master.

DIALOGUE XXII.

The most plausible Exceptions of Atheists against the World's Creation are refuted.

Euseb. **I** Have done with my Arguments, which must be very satisfactory, unless you can invalidate them by urgent Reasons, and prove by Evidence *a priori*, or at least from the very Nature and Constitution of the World, that it was impossible to be made : Favour me therefore with a short List of your Reasons, range them, if you please, in Rank and File, draw them up to the best Advantage, and make the most of them ; yet I fancy, when all is done, you must establish the World's Eternity by begging heartily, not by proving

proving it; and if I stay, till you evince it by Reason, the World may have an End, before you prove Hazard or Necessity give it a Beginning.

Theom. In the first place; we cannot give the World a Beginning without forcing Reason, and imposing on our Understanding. This Doctrine must be supported on the Ruins of first Principles, and whosoever abets it must abjure those great Truths, that Mankind avows to be the Standard and Measure of all others. *Ex nihilo nihil fit* is the common Voice of Nature; 'tis too clear to be prov'd; it shines on the Understanding, as the Sun does on our Eyes; and we can as soon find Night at Mid-day, as Fallacy in the Axiom; yet if we admit Creation, we must dash out this Principle, and by the same Authority cashier all others, and then, as blind Men, we shall walk in the dark, we shall discourse without Rule, argue without Reason, and, like the Dog in the Fable, chop at the Shadow for the Substance, *i. e.* we shall mistake Falshood for Truth, and Error for Demonstration.

Secondly, 'Tis an undoubted Maxim in Philosophy, that to bolster up an Opinion, we must not multiply things without Necessity, *Non sunt multiplicanda antea sine Necessitate.* Now there is no need to forge an infinite Being, for the World might be of itself *ab æterno*: The most subtle Logician in the World can never make it appear that the *Hypothesis* implies a Contradiction in *Terminis*, or even by Inference. To what purpose do we entangle ourselves in Difficulties? Why do we frame an omnipotent, wise, and just Creator, with a thousand other pompous Titles, both unintelligible and frightful? Have Fears and Apprehensions such ravishing Charms? Cannot our Understandings be pleas'd unless they are *nonplus'd*? Nor be satisfied unless we hang them on the Tenters?

Thirdly, A thousand Parts of the Universe seem not only superfluous, but noxious: They are too vile even to make a Shew, and are only fit to increase the Number of Creatures, so that they reach not the Quality of Mutes, that serve, at least, for Pomp and Ostentation: Yet were they barely without Employment, without Station

Station or Design, I would let them lie quiet in the State of Idleness ; but alas, they were Executioners by Nature, as well as Office, and enter into the World to plague it : For Example, if there were a God, can you imagine he would so far abase his Power, or prostitute his Wisdom, as to produce *Lice* and *Fleas* ? That he would foul his Fingers with *Toads* ; or condemn his Omnipotence to dig *Flies* out of Dunghills ? Methinks it would suit better with three grand Attributes of a Deity, *Power*, *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, to clear the World of these Plagues, than to stock it : Plagues I call them, for their very End is Mischief ; some torment a Man, others kill him, and the least troublesome molest him. You know, Sir, what a Figure *Domitian* makes in Story for his unbeseeming Diversions ; if it be beneath a Man to slay Vermin, 'tis certainly below God to make them. Had I an Inclination to believe the World was made, I would turn *Manichean*, and rather admit two first Principles than one : Now if these Insects were not created, why should I admit a creating Principle of any thing else ? Come, Sir, let us say rather, all things were of themselves, than vote God the Drudgery of making them. They are below the Care of an infinite Majesty, and the Power of the Omnipotent. I am persuaded 'tis less irrational to deny a God, than to assign him the most sordid Employments ; first, of producing *Lice*, *Fleas* and *Toads*, and then of conserving them. I have many other Exceptions against your Opinion ; but these suffice to discard it even of Probability.

Euseb. You have propos'd your Difficulties, I will return an Answer. To the *First*, indeed a Man cannot persuade himself the World was the Product of Necessity or Chance, without affronting Reason, and tricking his Understanding : To ally those infinite Perfections of Eternity and Independence with the Vileness of creeping Insects, is to bring to one Centre, Extrems that can never meet : 'Tis to raise Vermin above their Level, and pull down those vast Perfections below theirs : 'Tis to invest *Toads* and *Frogs* with the Appurtenances of the Divinity, and to cloath 'em, like the

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Daw in the Fable with gaudy Plumes that belong to another : But when we make God the Author of the World, we stumble upon no Absurdity ; for tho' the World be a stately Work, yet I conceive it neither surpasses the Power nor the Skill of a most powerful and most wise Artist. Omnipotence has certainly an excellent Knack at making, and an infinite Wisdom at contriving. Seeing therefore the Perfection of the Work is not above the Abilities of the Architect, we do not on this Account transgress any known Principle if we ascribe it to him.

Indeed, by admitting Creation, I banish your *ex nihilo nihil fit*, from the Number of Principles ; but I do not at all intrench upon Nature, nor encroach upon the Prerogative of the Understanding by out-lawing it : 'Tis guilty of Intrusion, and holds the Place by the favour of Ignorance : Those People who first principled it, were without Principles themselves, they knew not the Extent of Omnipotence, nor invaded its Privileges. An omnipotent Power can do any thing that is possible, *i. e.* that implies not a Contradiction : Shew me, if you can, a Contradiction that an *All-powerful Being should make something without the Help of previous Matter* ; if you cannot, your Principle is justly degraded : Nor will other Maxims be involv'd in its Disgrace ; they'll keep their Post in spite of Opposition, and receive Submission from Reason, where-e'er they meet it : But if you suffer your Maxim to be restrain'd, and not let it ramble into the other World, I'll embrace it with open Arms, as *Ocellus* and *Aristotle* did : Yet in this Case it will signify no more than that all natural Generations suppose a Subject ; and in this Sense I say of your Principle, what one said of *Euclid's* first Demonstration ; *They were so plain, that an Ass could not miss them* : In a Word, *ex nihilo nihil fit*. Nature can give Being and Life to no new Productions, unless she has a Subject to work on : In this Point she has no Prerogative above a Carver, tho' in the other she far exceeds, for her Works are more fine and delicate ; she gives Life, the other's Skill stops at Figure : But if we look upon God, your Principle

ciple is out of Doors ; he can not only work on Matter, but make it : This argues, you'll say, an Excess of Power ; 'tis true, but yet it does not out-stretch Omnipotence.

To the *Second*, I answer, your Argument faulters in every Part ; it proves too much, and by consequence just nothing : It stands for either side of the Contradiction, and therefore supports neither. For as you argue thus, *'Twas possible for the World to exist of itself*, therefore *we must not father it upon any superior Agent* : So by the same Logick I may conclude, that either all the Materials, that compose *London*, rang'd themselves in that fine Order we see them, or that Chance and Hazard blunder'd upon it, because either way is possible : Nay, methinks your Argument pleads for any Absurdity : 'Tis possible for Stones to speak, therefore for aught we know they do, when they are alone, and if they keep Silence in our Company, 'tis out of the same Policy Baboons were mute in *America* (as the *Indians* told the *Spaniards*,) viz. to avoid their Cruelty. 'Tis possible for an excellent Watch to start up from a casual Combination of Atoms : Let us therefore outlaw *Tompion*, and transport the whole Company of Watch-makers into *Virginia* to plant *Tobacco* ; their Art is superfluous in *England*, as well as their Persons, since Possibility has set up Shop, Watches will pour in upon us by thousands, we may take them up as the *Jews* did Quails, and when we have made our own Provision, pleasure a Friend with half a Dozen.

Theom. You are in a Vein of Pleasantry, but Arguments are seldom laught out of Countenance. If Possibility be a weak Proof, Mirth is a feeble Solution.

Euseb. You wrong me, Sir, I am as serious as the Matter will bear, and if my Discourse has any thing of Mirth, you are beholden to the Subject for the Diversion. A Buffoon under a grave Disguise, may be mistaken for a venerable Alderman; but when he is cas'd, the Alderman retires to make room for Scaramouch. To treat Fooleries with Respect, is to misplace Ceremony ; and not to lay them open, is but a Degree from abetting them.

Theom.

Theom. If Contempt can baffle an Argument, the most strict Demonstrations are not secure : By your leave, Sir, you either mistake the Strefs of my Reason, or sling in a handful of piquant Raileries to evade it : Pray attend ; from this Antecedent, *'Twas possible for the World to be ab æterno a se*, this Inference follows, therefore it did exist : For if the World was possible *ab æterno*, 'tis a necessary and independent Being ; but 'tis evident that a necessary and independent Being is eternal, therefore if the World were possible *ab æterno*, 'tis manifest it did exist *a se ab æterno* ; and therefore, all Recourse to a Deity is vain and superfluous. What Absurdity can be found in so plain a Discourse, but that a Man of Wit did not comprehend it ?

Euseb. Your Argument with these Amendments is still defective ; it proves not at all the Question, but impudently begs it. For it amounts to this, that the World was *ab æterno*, therefore it was *ab æterno*. If you intend to make any thing of your *Enthymem*, prove first the Antecedent, and then we will consider what is to be done with the Consequence. Now I have already prov'd the World could not possibly exist *ab æterno* (as you suppose) without any other Proof than a bare Assertion. In the mean time, methinks this Argument proves as forcibly the Contradiction of your *Thesis* *'twas not possible for the World to exist of itself* *ab æterno*, therefore it did not. You will put me without doubt to the Proof of the Antecedent, and with Reason ; for till that be establish'd, nothing can be concluded : But then the same Task lies on your Hands, and till you have evinc'd that *'twas possible for the World to exist of itself* *ab æterno*, your Conclusion must lie dormant.

To the third I answer : To pronounce on Things at random, either marks a great Pride, or a superlative Ignorance : You cannot judge which Springs are useful in a Watch, which are superfluous, unless you comprehend the Frame of that artificial Fabrick ; and certainly you would conclude very ill, that such a Wheel was needless, because you did not understand its Office.

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The World is a curious Engine, composed of ten Millions of secret Springs, do you know the Nature of each? If you do not, pray dissect them, and expose the Anatomy to our Contemplation; if you do, you are unfit to sit on the Bench; your Sentence is both rash and erroneous, and you deserve to stand at the Bar for having disgraced the Tribunal. You must remember this Axiom of *St. Thomas*, *Perfecta bonitas in rebus creatis, non inveniretur, nisi esset ordo Bonitatis*, The Perfection of Creatures would be defective, if there were no Degrees, no Order of Perfection: We should tarnish the Lustre, and impair the Beauty of the Universe, if we diminish'd the Multitude, or temper'd the Disproportion of so many Things, that by a most admirable Dissention, and a most concurring Discord, conspire to the Grace and Harmony of the Whole: Had you been called to Council by the Maker of the World, you would have persuaded him to frame it all of Gold or Diamonds; as that unskilful Painter, who not being able to copy out the charming Features of *Hellen*, hid them together with his Ignorance under an embroidered Mantua, and so instead of a fair Woman, drew nothing but shining Drapery. No Creature is superfluous, that can proclaim its great Master's Glory and Majesty; this is a noble Employment, worthy of the Seraphins, yet not above the Capacity of *Flies* and *Spiders*. Vile Insects are quicken'd by the Almighty, and nothing but an Omnipotent Hand can frame them: The Power of your *Alexanders* and *Cæsars* was never able to breathe Life into a Worm: The one pillaged the *East* indeed, and welter'd in Blood and Slaughter of Innocents; the other, like a Tempest, swept all the *West* before him; yet, after they had butcher'd a Million of Men, they were not able to give Life to a *Caterpillar*: Besides, how dare you term these poor Creatures idle, of whom God makes use to confound the Pride of Atheists, and to read continual Lessons of Humility to all Men? These Gentlemen are incredulous, because they overrate their Parts; they suppose, if there were a God, their piercing Wits would make strange Discoveries; and because the Majesty of a Deity dazzles their battish Eye-

Eye-sight, they rather choose to plunge into Infidelity, than to acknowledge their Ignorance : To cure this insolent Frenzy, God has flung these puny Creatures in your Way ; he bids you examine the fine Contexture of each Part if you can, the Use of every Muscle, the Nature of their Souls, and of all those hidden Springs that cause Life and Motion ; and when you have learnt this *A, B, C*, it will be time enough to ascend to more sublime Contemplation. Now, Sir, neither you, nor the greatest Philosopher that ever breathed, can give a tolerable Account of the most despicable Insect : You know neither its Nature, nor half its Properties : You are as ill inform'd of its Causes, as of its Effects ; and the various Systems of Generation and Corruption are but so many Demonstrations of God's Power, and Man's Weakness. So that God lays before you these Vermin as a Remedy against Pride, and what is more, against Atheism : He blunts those Darts you level against him by interposing *Flies* and *Lice* ; he disarms your Insolence, and strikes out of your Hands those Arguments you employ against him. I cannot, say you, comprehend God ; an infinite Being passes my Conception ; therefore *there is no such Thing* : You might as well infer, that all you see is nothing but a Scene of Fallacy and Illusion ; that you and I are mere Fantasms and Spectres, the Product of Imagination ; for there is not one single Thing in the whole Mass of Creation, you comprehend. Your Understanding falls under the Weight of a Straw, you cannot tell whether it has Parts or no Parts, before the Division ; you know neither the Nature of a Stone, nor the Properties of a Worm ; you are a Stranger even in your own House, though you think, speak, and move ; Thoughts, Speech, and Motion puzzle you ; we have Assurance indeed there are such Things ; but if we press the Inquiry a little farther, we must expect small Satisfaction. What Man, who finds his Understanding posed by such ordinary and trivial Instances, who flags under the Consideration of almost nothing, will be so bold, and at the same time so foolish, as to question God's Existence, because he cannot comprehend it ? Now, though all
those

those things you are pleased to call idle had no other End but to gravel the great Pretenders to Omniscience, to confound their Pride, and to heal their unreasonable Incredulity by Induction, they would render very good Service both to their deluded Fellow-creatures, and to their Omnipotent Creator.

Besides, we have a particular Tendernefs, as well as Value for our Bodies; we rack our Thoughts, and even torment our Conscience to please them; they must be pamper'd at the Expence of our Souls, though they burn for the Debauch hereafter. To cure this raging Transport, God applies a loathsome, but sovereign Remedy: He shews us what our idolized Bodies are by the Infection of *Lice*, *Worms*, and *Toads* they produce; and oftentimes this humbling Spectacle of Mortality frights us more effectually to our Duty, than the Prospect of the tormenting Instruments of Fire and Brimstone, Darknefs, and Despair. Did these poor Gentlemen, who whine away at a Female's Feet their Happiness, Money, and Souls too, but seriously consider that the Object of their Worship must once become Food to those vile Creatures you both condemn and abhor; that those Eyes they admire to Adoration, will once set in Dust, and be drown'd in Putrefaction; that those Cheeks, that Frenzy stiles the Seat of the *Graces*, will be transformed not only into the Throne, but even into the Nature of *Toads*, *Worms*, and *Serpents*; did they, I say, but consider these obvious but moving Truths, they would remove their Affections to those noble Objects, and then they would confess Vermin is more useful than they imagin'd.

Again, all these Creatures have many useful Properties we know, and more we know not: *Lice*, *Snails*, and *Worms* are Remedies for some Diseases, and I have been acquainted with those who admired a Ragout of *Maggots*. If *Toads* and *Vipers* are poisonous, they also afford Antidotes against Poison; and if sometimes they kill, they as often save. A Soup of *Vipers* is a Medicine both modish and wholesome; it sweetens the Blood, and inspirits it. Certainly Things endowed with such excellent Qualities are neither superfluous
nor

nor idle: No, no; they both benefit the World and adorn it. *Deus*, says *St. Austin*, Lib. II. de Civ. cap. 2. *ita artifex magnus in magnis est, ut minor non sit in parvis, quæ parva non sua granditate quæ nulla est, sed artifices sapientia metienda est*: God is so great a Workman in great Things, that he is not less in small ones; they are not to be measured by their Greatness, because they have none, but by the Wisdom of the Artist.

In fine, to conclude with *William Bishop of Paris*, *Nascitur aranea cum lege, libro 8^o lucerna*: God has instructed all Creatures in every Point of their Duty: The very *Spider* brings into the World its Rules, Book, and Torch, and knows its Lesson as soon as 'tis able to learn it. At the first Signal of the Omnipotent, they all fall to work: The *Bee* makes innocent Inroads upon Flowers, the *Silkworm* spins out its own Entrails, and weaves royal Robes for Princes; the Fish sport in the Waters, the Beasts of Service expect the Commands of their Masters; and small Seeds, though dead, give Life to Trees, which bring Men both Pleasure and Profit. Nothing is idle, nothing refractory in the World but Men, who abuse their Liberty to their Shame, and mispend the precious Moments of their Lives to their eternal Ruin.

From the Superfluities of Insects you step over to their Vileness; and indeed, if the first Fault were proved home, I would say guilty to the other. For certainly a Thing too inconsiderable to fill any Office in the vast Empire of the Universe, must be meanly provided with Abilities. I suppose, Sir, your Apprehension takes the just Measure of Things, that it never over-flourishes Objects, but agrees exactly with the Pattern: Your Judgment is squar'd by the Model in the Apprehension, and if this be exact, that cannot well be mistaken. Now I have heard Gold shines very gloriously on your Head, and that you fancy Diamonds sparkle more in your Cabinet, than in that of the great *Mogul*: These things you judge neither below your Care, nor your Esteem; and should I venture to call them a base Lumber, vile Minerals, or childish Trifles, you would suspect my Prudence: Yet all the Diamonds
of

of the *Golcundian Mines*, all the Ore of *Potosi* falls short of the Perfection of the vilest Animal. Gold may shine, but cannot breathe; Diamonds may glitter, but cannot move; an Insect crawls in a more elevated Sphere; it lives, and this sole Prerogative is above the Reach and Capacity of Metal; indeed these things are handsomely varnish'd; and 'tis the Colour alone that justifies your Esteem, and makes some Atonement for your Dotage. If therefore you have not quite forsaken Reason, either esteem Gold or Jewels less, or Insects more; if those are vile, you must think of a new World, to express the Baseness of the other.

I cannot dismiss this Argument, till I have brought the *Epicurean* Part of it to examen. 'Tis below the Majesty of God, you say, to extend his Care to the Direction and Conservation of such despicable Creatures; and then very philosophically you infer he does not; but because this does not serve your Turn, you advance a Step, and tell us, they may as well come into the World without his Help, as continue without it.

Your Argument is built on a false *Hypothesis*; there is no Creature despicable in the whole Universe but the proud Atheist, who thinks so. Harken to *Aristotle*, who saw as far into Nature as any of our Libertines, Lib. i. de Partu Animal. cap. 5. *Viliorum animalium rationem propensionemq; puerili fastidio sprevisse dignum nequaquam est, cum nulla sit res Naturæ, in qua non mirandum aliquid inditum habeatur: To slight the Oeconomy and Perfection of the most imperfect Animal is childish, seeing there is nothing in Nature so minute and inconsiderable, that has not some Qualities worthy of Admiration.* The Vileness of the most abject Worm consists not in the Perfection it possesses, but in those it wants: 'Tis relatively so; and in this Sense, every limited Being is superlatively vile, if compar'd with the boundless Perfection of the Creator. But if we consider them in themselves, they participate some faint Rays of Divine Perfections; they are the Effects of his Power, and Objects of his Love; for had their Natures no Similitude with the Perfections of God, he could not have produc'd them; and did he

he not love them, he would not : Now to make them worthy both of his Power and Love, and not of his Care, is ridiculous and impious. Indeed did we travesty God into a Shepherd, as the Poets did *Apollo* ; did we suppose he left his Godhead in Heaven, to feed Flocks on Earth, or that he took up his Habitation with Pismires, or lodg'd in Dunghills with Worms, your Objection would appear reasonable ; but we must cast off these Anthropomorphite Principles. To act on Earth, he needs not abandon Heaven ; nor dispatch Courtiers to intimate his Orders, or Deputies to execute 'em ; he is as necessarily in all Places, as in all Times : He created all things without Labour, and conserves them without Solitude. The Management of the World neither takes one Grain from his Happiness, nor adds one ; he is as much at Leisure since its Creation as before ; and tho' he be without *Embarrass*, he is never idle. Besides, though we cannot dabble in Pitch without being defil'd, that Aphorism of the wise Man concerns not him ; he shines in Mire, glitters in Dirt, and like the Sun gilds corrupted Carcasses, without being tainted or sullied. I therefore conclude your Philosophy is of the same Piece with your Divinity, and both are drawn from the Original of *Epicure* : They are too foolish, methinks, to trepan a wise Man, and too blasphemous to engage a good Man ; and indeed I am half persuaded you laugh at his System in your Heart, tho' you applaud it in Public, and would easily desert his Belief, if you could enjoy, without Remorse, the Benefit of condescending Moralities.

Theom. Come, Sir, you have harangu'd enough upon this Subject ; methinks the Chamber begins to smell of Vermin, we have been upon an uncleanly Topic : To discourse of *Worms*, *Toads* and *Maggots* looks like treading Eels out of Mud ; they are unphilosophical Employments, and we will commit the farther Discussion of the Poet to a Committee of *Gold-finders*, or a Club of *Rake-kennels*.

DIALOGUE XXIII.

The seventh Proof. The palpable Absurdities which follow from no GOD, demonstrate there is one.

Euseb. I Omit many other Arguments that plead most powerfully for a God; in this Number we may place Miracles and Prophecies. If ever there were a Miracle, all the Atheist's fine *Hypotheses* fall to the Ground, all the Leaves in *Windsor Forest* will not be able to hide the Folly of his Incredulity; for if ever a dead Man has been brought back to Life, it must have been done by a Power above the Energy of natural Causes: To revive a dead Man, is as hard as to infuse Life into Marble, and I think all the Abilities of Nature can never reach this Operation. Now that such Miracles have been wrought in the World, may be made out by as plain Evidence, as the Nature of past Matters of Fact require, *i. e.* by unquestionable Authority, and more can neither rationally be expected nor desired.

Again, to foretel Things that depend merely upon the Exercise of our Free-will, is a manifest Argument of a God; for an Understanding, that can foresee what will happen, by the same Perspicacity must know what has happened, and *a fortiori*, whatever does actually happen, and by consequence whatever can be known. Now such a vast Extent of Knowledge can only suit with a Being infinitely perfect, at least far superior to Man: For as *Pindar* takes Notice, *Ad futura cæcutiunt mentes humanæ*, Future Events lie out of the Sphere of human Understandings: We see nothing but Obscurity and Darkness before us; we cannot tell what Changes, what Revolutions of Designs may be made in our Breasts before To-morrow, much less what other Men will say or do a hundred Years hence. Whence the Latins call foretelling of Things, *Divinatio*, as if it was the peculiar Privilege of the Divinity: And the Prophet *Isaiah* bids the Gods of the Heathens prove their Title to

Worship by Prophecy. *Enunciate quæ ventura sunt in futurum, & sciemus quia Dii estis vos.*

Now it is clear beyond Dispute, that Men have foretold future Events with all their Circumstances; which they could not do by the Force of human Wit and Industry: Therefore, they received the Faculty from another who can dive into Futurities, and discover all the Windings and *Mæanders* of the Hearts of Men to come, as well as of those who are, and have been. I will cull out two or three Prophecies of a hundred which may be found in our Scripture, and desire you to spend a cool and impartial Thought upon them. *1 Kings*, chap. xiii. whilst *Jeroboam* sacrificed on an Altar to *Baal*, a Prophet cried out, *Altare, Altare, hæc dicit Dominus, ecce Filius nascetur domi David, Josias Nomine, & immolabit super te Sacerdotes ex:elforum, qui nunc in te thura succendunt.* This happened exactly 361 Years after: The Prophet *Isaiab*, c. 41. foretels the Empire of *Cyrus* and his Name 200 Years before he was born. *Daniel* the Subversion of the *Chaldean* Monarchy, the Grandeur of the *Median*, *Persian*, *Grecian* and *Roman* Empires; nay, he descends to particular Accidents, so that he seems rather to compile a Story of past, than a Prophecy of future Transactions; yet the Event runs even with his Prediction, 'tis true to a Letter, and therefore to Admiration. Now this alone wounds Atheism mortally, and stabs its grand Principle, *There is no God.* For this Discourse is most certain, *Nothing in Nature is able to foresee things which depend merely upon the Free-will of Man, and will happen some Ages after: But 'tis certain that Men have foreseen things that depended on the Free-will of Man, and did happen several Ages after they were foretold, therefore there is an intelligent Being above Nature.* You can only evade the Force of the Argument by denying the Matter of Fact; but when you strike upon an evident Absurdity, and must call in all Records, there is not any Story in the World more authentic, than that of the Scripture: Now to disbelieve all History out of Fear of being imposed on, is to play the Fool with Caution, and to stretch Weariness into Stupidity. I intend not to descant on those two Proofs,

nor

nor to draw them up to their full Advantage; confront them at leisure, with History both sacred and profane; compare the Text with Events, push on the Examen not only to Exactness, but to the Extremity of Criticism, only stop within the Terms of Reason, and expect no greater Evidence than Things past will bear: Do not first pass Sentence, and then examine Evidences, first condemn, and then inquire into the Merits of the Cause, and I am confident you will confess, Things have been both done and foretold, that come not within the Reach of Nature; and therefore you will be obliged to acknowledge there is something that commands Nature, and calls those things, that are not, by their Name, as well as those that are.

Theom. I will take into Consideration your Proposals in due Time; but pray read us the Register of Absurdities: This is your present Task, and I am impatient to hear it.

Euseb. I shall open my Indictment with an Accusation able to make a Man's Ears tingle, notwithstanding your Tenets are guilty of the Impeachment. There is no God, you say, no Providence to watch over the Children of Men, no Goodness to reward Virtue, no Justice to punish Vice; hope of a future Bliss is but a pleasing Imagination, fear of Torments but a vain Bugbear, invented by Melancholy, and improved by Custom; does not this accursed Doctrine open the Gate to Pride, Arrogance and Tyranny? Does it not let in upon us Perfidiousness, Perjury, and Sacrilege? Does it not invite Mankind to turn off Shame; to cashier Modesty; to plunge into the Mire of Lasciviousness; and in short, to break off all Commerce, all Correspondence with Neighbours, Friends and Relations? Now can any thing be imagined more absurd, than to father such horrid, such universal Corruptions on the first greatest and supreme Truth? This all Atheists do. For as the prime Verity (if there be a God) is, *There is a God*, who rules, directs, and governs the Universe; so if there be none, that must be degraded, and this substituted in its Place, *There is no God* who rules, directs, and governs the Universe; but this Truth will extinguish

Fear, and stifle Reverence ; it lets loose the whole Crowd of Passions, and exposes the World to Pillage and Rapine ; for Men void of Fear, are void of Restraint, and so set up Appetite for the Standard of all their Actions.

Secondly, It will follow, that a Falshood, an Impossibility, a mere Chimera, is the Cause of Religion, of Justice, Temperance, and Modesty ; that it is the Foundation of Peace, Concord, and the very Basis that supports all well-ordered-Common wealths ; for the Persuasion of a Deity, the Fear of his Anger, and Hope of his Mercy awe Men more than civil Rewards or Punishments. Now is it not down-right Madness, to think, that a Chimera, a mere Fiction, that has no Being, but in some deluded Brain, should countenance Virtue and persuade it ? Should discountenance Vice, and load it with Shame and Infamy ; whereas the prime Truth in the Atheists Catechism, *There is no God*, leads Men into all Abominations.

Thirdly, It will follow, that Wisdom stifles Virtue, and Error cherishes it ; for if there be no God, it's Error and Folly to believe there is one, 'tis a Piece of Wisdom to stand up and protest against a Forgery, so prejudicial to Truth, Reason, and Sensuality : It's a Piece of Wisdom to maintain that Truth and Wisdom are Plagues, not only to particular Men, but even to Societies ; that they drown Kingdoms in Deluges of Corruption, and cut off the Bands of Unity, that knit the Parts together ; that they must be clapt under the Hatches, and condemn'd to Darknes and Confinement, as Traitors to Humanity, and Rebels to Government : But then on the other Side, it follows, that Error and Ignorance support Commerce, maintain Tranquility, and enliven Society ; that they are to be promoted as the Source and Origin of all Good, that they enlighten the Understanding, polish the Will, and not only render People wise, but good.

Fourthly, That all those Heroes who have been famous, either for Learning or Piety, were wretchedly mistaken in a thing of the highest Concern : They fell down before an airy Statue of God, forg'd in the Brain,
struck

struck out of Error, and shap'd by Vision, Custom and Education : Whilst Men, unprovided of Wit, destitute of Conscience, of profligate Lives, and of worse Principles, burthensome to their Countries, and scandalous to their very Species, unravel the Truth, and unmask the grand Imposture : Before a Man can believe so potent an Absurdity, he must turn off Reason, and conclude, that the worst of Men were the best ; the most illiterate, the most wise ; and those who have ever justly been esteem'd Monsters, the only Ornaments of our Kind.

Fifthly, That to pay Homage and Obedience to God, to fear Punishment, or hope for Reward, are foolish and vain Actions, and wholly opposite to Reason : For to revere, worship, and tremble at a Chimera, is both childish and ridiculous. It's unreasonable and impious into the Bargain : If therefore God sits on the same Level with an Impossibility, if he has no other Being, than what a deluded Understanding is pleased to give him, he is no more to be valued, than all those impossible Combinations that are spawn'd by Fancy, and crawl in the Imagination.

Sixthly, That Impiety, Sacrilege and Blasphemy are laudable Actions, and agreeable to the most inviolable Dictates of Reason. For if there be no God, all the Actions that fly in his Face, that attack his imaginary and usurp'd Grandeur are good : *First*, Because they are public Protestations of a Truth, *viz.* *That there is a God.* And, *Secondly*, Because they are efficacious Means to disabuse Mankind, and to withdraw it from the erroneous Persuasions of a Deity and Providence. Pray, Sir, tell me, are not these most dismal Consequences ? Are they not able to chill the Blood, and to cast Humanity into Convulsions ? They cannot be thought on without Horror, nor believ'd without Fury. Had I a Hand in the Government, or any Power with the Commons, I would bring all the Abettors of those lewd Tenets within the Statutes of Treason. They tend directly to the Subversion of Order and Discipline. When Men believe so loose Principles, their Actions cannot be regular, Nothing but

want of Occasions to be Villains can plead for their Honesty : Impotence alone is the Guard of their Innocence, and of their Neighbours Safety.

Theom. You are smart upon Atheists, and methinks intend to hector them into Religion, rather than convince them. But, Sir, a little Reason goes farther than much Satire, they are Men of Mettle, and dare look a Rhodomontade in the Face : They will not be frightened out of their Opinion with Buckram Invective.

Euseb. Did you see a Rascal ready to set Fire to your House, or a Bravo making at your Breast with a drawn Sword, in such Exigencies you would lay aside Formality and Ceremony : And I suppose such extraordinary Circumstances would easily justify a little Smartness. This is our present Case. By denying a Deity, you pull off all Restraint, you let loose the whole Kennel of Vices, and hollow in Pride, Rapine and Cruelty, to worry us ; you do not only lop off the Branches of Subordination and Government, but tear them up by the Roots, and undermine the very Foundation of Society : We cannot carry on any Commerce, nor live in any Corporation, without trusting sometimes our Neighbour : For it is impossible to make all Matters so sure, as to leave nothing to Honesty and Honour. Trust is the Ground, the Basis and first Principle of Commerce ; without this, we must stand at Defiance with all the World, and place Security in our Power alone. Now if there be no Superior to awe us, no Principle within us that points out Good and Evil, it's absurd and foolish to trust any Man ; for there is no Ground for such a Confidence in your *Hypothesis*, nothing that can persuade a Man to sacrifice his Interest to Truth and Justice.

For if there be no God, Man is his own Law, and therefore can offend no body but himself ; nay, nor can he offend himself ; for if he be supream, whatever he does is right. Let him contrive Plots against Church and State ; let him worry the Innocent, or prey upon the Poor, he remains loyal, tho' plung'd in Treasons ; spotless, tho' dipt in Blood ; and without Sin, though
loaded

loaded with Crimes. Now such Doctrine must of necessity unhinge Society, and turn Kingdoms into Heaps of Rubbish, and Piles of Confusion ; for it withdraws all those Props that sustain Obedience, and breaks those Bands that cement Unity. A Man must be made of Ice not to express some Concern at the Approach of so threatening a Danger.

Theom. Of what Danger ?

Euseb. Of our Lives and Fortunes ; for nothing can secure them but the Impotence of Atheists. We are outlaw'd by your Principles already, and should quickly be clap'd on the Gallows did your Power correspond with your Intentions, at least to your Maxims. But your Forces are dispers'd, they are canton'd in Taverns and Bawdy-Houses, and it's hard to draw them into a Body ; so that the Government stands, because you want Strength to overturn it : We enjoy Liberty, because you cannot enslave us ; and our Estates, because you dare not invade them.

Theom. These are reflecting Hints, and rather plead for Incivility than a God ; I had rather connive at the Affront than revenge it, and attribute it rather to Heat than Advertence.

Euseb. Under Favour, Sir, tho' your Tenets raise my Indignation, I think they deserve it ; yet Passion has not dimm'd my Understanding ; I speak with Reflection ; and if my Discourse displease you, thank your Principles for the Mortification. I say again, if there be no God, Man has no Superior ; if he has no Superior, he can be subject to no Law ; he can neither do well nor ill ; for Good and Evil are relative Denominations, and suppose a Law that prohibits the one, and either commands or counsels the other ; if he can do no ill, and is persuaded of this impeccable Prerogative, why will he not glut his Ambition with Treasons and Murders ; his Avarice with Rapines ; and his Incontinence with his Prostitutions ; These Actions sit very easy on Conscience ; they spawn on Sense, and charm Nature ; nay, according to your grand Maxim, they deserve the Name of Virtues, as well as Obedience, Justice, or Chastity, and are more easily practis'd

than forbear : Indeed, tho' you be neither under the Restraint of Natural Laws nor Divine, Civil Laws may fright you sometimes from the Practice ; for Atheists of all Men dote on their Skin, they love not to make a public Intrado into the *Old-Baily*, nor to be carted in Ceremony to *Hide-Park-Corner*. But then what Government can be secure, when Subjects obey meerly for want of an Opportunity to rebel ? And are only innocent when Interest forbids them to be guilty ?

Theom. This is an odious Subject, pray let us step over it ; I am afraid you will turn Evidence, if Passion carries you a little farther, and I may be put to the Exigence of solving Difficulties at the Bar. I will now return an Answer to your most material Objection. You say, if there be no God, that Justice, Temperance, Modesty, and Obedience flow from a meer Chimera ; that Fiction, Imposture and Falshood support Society ; this you storm at, and throw it among the first Class of Absurdities : But pray reflect, that Ignorance and Policy at *Rome* and *Athens* set up a Multiplicity of Gods, they carv'd Idols of all Sizes, and of all Creatures ; they persuaded the Vulgar that their mute Statues punish'd Vice, and rewarded Virtue. This Imposture cheated many into Justice, Chastity, and Obedience. You cannot deny but Deists were imaginary, that they were as void of Sense, as of Reason, and were so far from being able either to protect their Profelytes, or chastise their Enemies, that they could not defend themselves. In fine, Sir, they were *Nothing*, yet these *Nothings*, these *Chimera's* scar'd People into their Duty, and aw'd them into heroic Flights of Morality. If the Persuasion of a God, (tho' there be no such Thing) works the same Effects, where lies the Absurdity ? If Falshood, two thousand Years ago, gull'd People into Submission, and wheedled them into Virtue, it may pray over again the same Game in our Age ; we are liable to Ignorance, as well as the *Athenians* or *Romans*, and what either quicken their Hopes, or enliven their Fears, may make Impression upon ours.

Euseb.

Euseb. I confess that the Persuasion of the antient Pagans was erroneous, and false in particular, but not in general: They acknowledg'd a Deity who look'd into Human Affairs, and who would once exact a strict Account of their most minute Actions; so far they were right; but then when they applied this Notion of a God to Stocks or Stones, to wicked Men or accursed *Demons*, they deviated from Truth: The Principle therefore of These Men was true, *viz. A God*: But the Application of it to *Jupiter, Mars or Venus* was erroneous; for these were Persons of most profligate Morals: The first, an Adulterer, the second, a Murderer, and the third, a most impudent Harlot. So that neither the Attributes of a Divinity, nor the Management of the World, nor the Vengeance of ill Actions, nor the Reward of good ones belong'd to them. Now when Men abstain'd from Immorality out of Fear of offending God, or practis'd Virtue out of Desire to please him; they were not mov'd by this Persuasion, that there was a supream Being, who hated Ill, and lov'd Good; and would punish that, and reward this; which universal Persuasion is most true; and Virtue that stands on this Principle, has no *Chimera* to support it: Indeed they clap the Divinity on Men, invested Devils with its great Prerogatives, and worship'd those Gods of their own Institution; and so blunder'd about the particular Subject of Adoration, notwithstanding they retain'd the Notion of a Deity able to chastise the wicked, and so had a kind of true Foundation of political and moral Virtue: But if there be no God, or if he mews himself up in Heaven, without entring into our Concerns, the very Foundation of all Probity, all Subordination is false and fictitious, and by consequence, all Trust, Commerce, Piety and Society are sustain'd by Imposture and Forgery, which is an Opinion so unkind to our very Nature, and so irrational, that no Man can abett it without Folly and Madness.

A Gentleman of the Company interrupted *Eusebius*. Sir, said he, I confess your Arguments have Force; they are rational, and a Man must be very hard to please

that will not relish them. But unless our Souls are immortal, what Reason have Men either to love his Goodness, or to fear his Severity? His Blessing must stop with our Breath, and his Curses cannot overtake us in Eternity: For if Death robs us of Life and Being, all our Hopes and Fears are at a stand: They disappear with our last Sigh, and vanish into nothing. So that the Doctrine of a God is not sufficient alone to reform Mankind, and all Religion may be regarded as useless, or flung among the Ceremonies Divines term *Diaphera*; for if my Soul be mortal, future Rewards are impossible, as well as Torments: Why then should I court Virtue at the Expence of present Satisfaction? Or withstand Appetite with the Forfeiture of Pleasure? Why should I bridle Lust, or prescribe Bounds to my Ambition, if neither Continence be regarded, nor Pride humbled? For my part I own ingenuously, I shall make the best use of Time, till I am sure there is an Eternity. I shall trim up my House of Clay, and lay out my Stock on Reparations: My Passions shall live at Discretion, and range without Controul.

If my Arguments convince you that there is a God, replied *Eusebius*, you cannot question the Immortality of the Soul. God and the Immortality of the Soul are Correlatives, and whatever Proof makes for the one, establishes the other: For as I hinted above, if there be a God, he is just, and therefore crowns Virtue, and revenges Vice: Now it is evident that the Just oftentimes in this Life receive no Reward, and the Impious no Punishment; therefore they must receive it in the next; therefore our Souls must not die with our Bodies; therefore they are immortal. Again, if our Souls are immortal, there is a God. For supposing this noble Prerogative, which way did the Soul come by it, but by the Goodness and Power of an infinite Agent? It can neither by the Effect of Matter nor Motion; these Things are below the Level of a Spirit, they have neither Life nor Knowledge; how can they infuse into another those Perfections that are Strangers to themselves? Did our Souls steal a Being from all Eternity? Where were they before they enter'd our Bodies?

Who

Who order'd my Soul to take Possession of my Body rather than of another ? Or where did it hover before it found the Settlement ? I suppose *Pythagoras's Metempsychosis* is grown out of Fashion in *Europe*, we send Souls no more on Expeditions of Knight-Errantry ; they scorn to take up with Swine, or to lodge with Camels and Elephants. If therefore they are immortal Spirits, you cannot avoid a Creator ; neither Hazard, Motion, or Matter can give us a good Account of their Origin.

Eusebius desired another Meeting the next Day, to put an End to the Conference. One Session, said he, addressing himself to the Company, will compleat the Work, and I desire your Presence ; I will only draw up in short the Sum of our Dispute, that you may at one View see the Strength of my Proofs, and the Weakness of my Adversaries : And then, *Theomachus*, if (in spite of Light) you resolve to remain in Darkeness, (after I have detected your Errors) I'll pity your Obstinacy. The Company accepted of the Appointment, and so broke up. But *Theomachus*, after mature Deliberation, thought best to wave the Interview ; he had been too often foil'd to venture another Push : Besides, he perceiv'd that some of the Gentlemen began to waver : The Reasons of *Eusebius* had done Execution ; altho' indeed none had declar'd for Religion, many approv'd it ; so that he fear'd another Conference, with a short Exhortation might detach some, and weaken his Party. And if the Success of the Controversy should be put to Vote, he foresaw nothing but Shame for himself, and Victory for his Antagonist : But the Matter being not determin'd (said he to one of his Intimates) like those who have a Suit depending, we may both pretend Right, and so we shall part Stakes. But to withdraw handsomely, he sent *Eusebius* this Letter.

S I R,

I Am sorry Necessity has forc'd me to disappoint you To-morrow ; an unforeseen Affair requires my Absence from Town ; 'tis both important and pressing, so that I cannot retard my Departure one Day without great Prejudice to my Concerns, and Danger to a Relation. I therefore disengage my Word, and presume you will excuse and pardon my Incivility : When I have rid my Hands of this troublesome Accident,

You may command, S I R,

Yours,

Eusebius read the true Design of *Theomachus* under his false Pretence ; and easily perceiv'd he retir'd to avoid both Conviction and Confusion, and indeed it's hard to determine which he dreaded most. For he was jealous of his Honour to Phrenzy, and obstinate in Infidelity to Madness. Notwithstanding *Eusebius* next Morning met the other Gentlemen at the Rendezvous, who were concern'd at the sudden Retreat of their Hero, yet some excus'd, tho' others blam'd him. *Eusebius* addressing himself to the Company, spoke to this Purpose.

The Conclusion of the CONFERENCE.

GENTLEMEN,

WE meet To-day to finish the Dispute ; and I thought the Controversy also, but the unexpected Retreat, (I would say Flight) of *Theomachus* has baffled my Hopes. Had he not suspected the Justice of his Cause, why did he so shamefully desert it ? I had no Design on his Honour, but on his Impiety. I should have disclaim'd the Glory of Conquest, had he but acknowledged his Defeat, and abjur'd an Error, that will at last ruin him, and those who inconsiderately abett it. Nay, an humble Confession of the Truth

Truth had secur'd his Reputation from Obloquy ; the Blemish had fallen on the Cause, not on his Wit ; but the Glory of Submission to the Truth had been wholly imputed to his Candour and the Sincerity of his Temper. People had thrown the Reproach of Atheism, rather on the Misinformation of his Understanding, than on the Perverseness of his Will, so that he could only fear to be esteem'd more unfortunate than criminal : But this ungentle Flight lays him open to the Severity of Censure, and all understanding Men must necessarily conclude, he wanted Abilities to defend a bad Cause, and Conscience to disown it. But I'll leave him to himself, and where can he be more uneasy, than in his own Company ? Though he be without a God, he is not without Fear, and who can sleep secure that harbours such a Fury ? Atheists (like the *China Mandarins*) are waited on by Hangmen that punish their own Delinquencies : They can never avoid the Arrest and Execution of their Consciences ; tho' they make a Sport of God, and a Diversion of Crimes in public, they are more serious in private ; which is a shrewd Sign their Atheism is imaginary, tho' their Impiety be real. *A God, or no God*, Gentlemen, is an important Question ; and those who incline to the *Negative*, would do well to examine it with Care, with Study, with Coolness and Impartiality, before they come to a final Resolution. When the *Athenians* heard of the Death of their mortal Enemy *Philip the Macedonian*, they were presently for manifesting their Joy by some public Scene of Jollity : But a Fellow among the Crowd bid 'em first be sure he was dead, lest one Day they might find him alive by the Severity of his Revenge. The Atheist of all Men should follow this wholesome, this prudent Advice ; and nothing but a strict Demonstration can secure him : For all the plausible Sophisms in the World will never rescue him from Danger ; nor by Consequence his Election from Folly : For so long as he is not demonstratively secure there is no Deity, for any thing he knows there is one ; and if there be, he will certainly feel the Exigence of that dreadful

dreadful Majesty he deny'd, by the Rigour of his Justice : It's therefore our Interest to believe there is a God, and to square our Actions by this Belief ; for we can be no Losers by Credulity ; but may be undone eternally by Infidelity : Indeed the Atheist is sensible enough his Case is desperate, if there be a God, and if one may believe him, wishes nothing more, than that it were in his Power to credit his Being : But, says he, this is the proper Work of Demonstration : Evidence alone settles the Judgment, of which I am wholly unfurnish'd : But this is a Blindness rather than an Excuse : A petty Artifice to excite Compassion, or to hide Folly and Madness under the Dress of Sincerity. If they expect Mathematical Evidence, they will die Atheists, for such Conviction is impossible ; and they that will only submit to Proofs of which the Matter is incapable, should rather purge than dispute : He is fitter for Physick than Reason, and I would counsel him to shave and air his Brain.

Now let me desire you, Gentlemen, by all that is dear, to take this Matter into Consideration, it deserves Time, Thought and Reflection. The Question is, Whether there be a God who eternally rewards Virtue, and eternally punishes Vice ? What can be more important, than to be well inform'd on which Side of the Contradiction Truth lies ? If in the next World there be no high Court of Justice, no Judge, no Account taken either of Good or Evil ; why should Men force Appetite, storm Inclination, or bridle Desire ? Why should they forego the Enjoyments of this Life, and sell present Satisfaction for a vain Expectation of a future Felicity ?

But then, if there be a God, Atheists are in ill Circumstances, they must take Leave of Life and Pleasure together, and give a sad Farewel to Delights. Their last Breath extinguishes Joy, and kindles a Flame not to consume, but to torment them eternally. Their Music will end in Tears, their Pleasure in Repentance, and their Repentance in Despair. It's a doleful Catastrophe to be dragg'd from a Palace into a Dungeon,
and

and from the Embraces of a *Dalilah* into those of everlasting Flames. What Man in his Senses would take the most glittering, and most gaudy Happiness in the World, together with such a dreadful Reversion of Torments? Yet if there be *Scientia in Excelsis*, Knowledge and Justice above, (that is a God) the Infidel Atheist will burn below, and feel the just Revenge of that powerful Majesty he so obstinately denied.

Now, Gentlemen, the Matter standing thus, withdraw from Hurry and Passion, take off all Affection from the present; divorce wholly from this World, till you are sure there is no such thing as another. Argue with yourselves thus: I believe *I am lawfully begotten*, I believe *I am baptiz'd*, and never doubted of either: Yet I have the bare Testimony of my Mother for the Truth of the first, and perchance the sole Authority of a Parson, or a Midwife for the Belief of the second. But all Nations tell me there is a God as well as Ages: Why therefore shall the Word of one Woman, or of one Man, not only sway, but fix and settle my Judgment in those Cases, and not the joint Testimony of all Men in this? I cannot contemplate the petty Springs of a Watch, or the rude Contrivance of a Cabbin, but presently the Sight leads me naturally to an Artificer. I cannot possibly ascribe the Frame of either to blind Chance, or fatal Necessity; and though I fool my Understanding, and enslave my Reason in a thousand Occasions, in this I cannot. They disobey the most pressing Commands of the Will, they pronounce boldly in spite of Practice and Inclination, that some Hand put the Wheels together, and rais'd the Cottage.

The most ill-shap'd Animal in the World, the most despicable Leaf, are more finely contriv'd than all the Machines that ever Art invented. If therefore the petty Fabrick of a Watch, the unpolish'd Frame of a poor Cottage, convince me they were made by the Hand of an Artificer, must I not confess this majestic Pile of the World, so vast, so various, so stupendous, was first contriv'd by the Wisdom, and then
created

created by the Power of a most perfect Agent ? If a less Motive sways my Judgment, a greater may ; and if my Assent be both firm and prudent in one Case, certainly it cannot be unstable and imprudent in the other. A Child may make these Reflections ; they are easy, obvious, and convincing : Reason therefore and Interest plead strongly against Atheism, and you cannot abett it without betraying both.

Prostrate (I beseech you) yourselves with bended Knees and bleeding Hearts before the Throne of that dread Majesty you have so often provok'd by your Immorality, and abjur'd by your Infidelity. Obstinacy enflames his Justice, but Tears extinguish it. It's in your Power either to try the Weight of his Anger, or the Sweetness of his Mercy : But if Atheism waits on you to his Tribunal, you must expect nothing but Damnation. God's Greatness will fright you, his Power will disarm you, and his Justice eternally torment you. In spite of Bravado's, Conscience will not only act the Part of an Accuser, but of an Executioner also. It will revenge with Interest those Rapes and Violences you have committed against it here, and turn those kind Admonitions you receiv'd with Raillery into so many Instruments of Punishment.

Gentlemen, dare you put these things to a venture ? Will you live in Infidelity as unconcernedly as if all the Terrors of another World were only frightful Dreams of Men awake ; or mere Productions of a feverish and discompos'd Brain ? Certainly I have made the Existence of a God too clear to be thought Fancy or Vision. And then I expect Prudence will not permit you to think it a Matter not to be regarded, whether you are eternally happy or miserable.

At least if you are resolv'd to play in this Life, and weep in the other, decoy not unwary Gentlemen into so mad a Resolution : Their Pains will not ease yours. If you plot against their Purse, have no Design upon their Religion. Scoff them not out of their *Creed*, tho' you wheedle them out of their
Estates ;

Estates; when you have swept away their present Stock, force them not to make over their Title to Heaven. You can gain nothing by their Loss; for the same time you rally them out of Heaven, you jest yourselves into Hell.

Besides, were the Existence of God, the Truth of Religion doubtful, yet they should be thought on with Seriousness, and spoken of with Reverence; for People put a great Stress on both. They look upon the Belief of a Deity, and the Practice of Religion here as necessary for their Happiness hereafter. They acknowledge it is not only their Duty, but also their Interest to believe a God, and to worship him. Methinks therefore it's a Breach of Civility, and a Failure in Breeding; it's an Affront to Christians as well as to their Maker to turn the Object of their Adoration into Sport and Diversion, and their Expectation into Romance: So that you cannot be profane without being Clowns. Pray therefore (at least for your Reputation's sake) employ your Wits and Tongues on a more credible Subject. Certainly Wit is not grown so sacrilegious, as not to be pleas'd without polluting holy Things. A Man may be civil without Blasphemy, and lay in a very fair Pretension to Ingenuity, without being guilty of Profaneness.

To draw towards an End; if you intend to search Truth with Serenity and Candour, take leave of Drollery, preach not down God, Religion and Sobriety, but treat with Respect those things Mankind reveres, for Men seldom honour what they ridicule; much less will they prostrate themselves to what they burlesque. Shake off therefore this buffooning Humour, and when the Tongue is brought under Discipline, the Heart will throw off all the Lets of Prejudice and Passion; and then the Understanding disengag'd from Violence, will easily submit to the Force of those Reasons I have laid before you.

But if you run on in a lewd Vein of Drollery and Impiety, the most persuasive Arguments in the World will never work upon you; you'll certainly
sport

sport yourselves into Damnation, and sink down laughing into Hell. But then those Flames that consume Mirth, will awake Despair. You'll begin to be both serious and wise, when 'twill be too late to be so. Oh, how foolish, how imprudent is it to deny a Deity in this World, and to believe one in the other! To live Atheists in London, and Theists in Hell!

The END of the SECOND PART.



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LONDON
 Printed in the Year 1800



THE
P U B L I S H E R
T O T H E
Young NOBILITY and GENTLEMEN
O F
E N G L A N D.

GENTLEMEN,

*T*HE former Two Parts of the Gentle-
man Instructed, have been so kindly re-
ceived by the Nobility, that I presume to
recommennd the Third also, to the Favour
of their Protection. Books make their
Fortune, as well as younger Brothers, by the Credit of
great Patrons ; they are unable to break though the Op-
position of Criticism, without the Support of Authority,
and so are supposed guilty, because no body will stand
up in their Defence ; for at present, Prejudice and
Censure run high, and, what is worse, out of their
proper Channel. Good Books generally meet with Re-
proach, and bad as often with Approbation. We square
our Judgments by our Conduct, so that it's odds those
Men who declare for Vice will never relish a Lecture of
Morality

Morality. No, no, when a Book condemns our Behaviour, we take the Freedom, by way of Reprizals, to condemn it; as if it were lawful, with Mr. Hobbs, to controul Reason, when Reason takes the Liberty to controul us.

I therefore expect that Libertines and Debauchees will take Check at the Freedom of these Papers, as well as at the Subject; and that possibly they may discharge a Volly of Reproaches upon the Author; for in a hurry, Passion mistakes a Friend for a Foe, and falls as foul on those who come to our Rescue, as on those who intend our Ruin; but the best on it is, the Force of their Weapons answers not the Strength of their Malice; for alas, a Jest makes a weak Thrust, and a Sarcasm a weaker; and sober Men seldom condemn a Book, because Libertines burlesque it, for the Opinion of such Judges is always suspected of Partiality, and so neither be a Credit to a Cause, nor a great Misfortune.

Who commissions this, Eusebius, said a Spark, to tutor all Mankind? To lash our Failures? To expose our Persons to Reproach and Infamy? Must he pedant it over his Betters, and revile Quality at Discretion? Has he not stript us of our Robes, and shewn us in Dishabile to the Rabble? First to render us cheap and despicable, and then to entertain the Public at our Expences? Though we are lewd, why must we appear little? Though we forfeit our Innocence, we have right to Respect; the Gentleman wants Breeding, and his Person should be brought to Penance as well as his Pen.

Why, good Sir, all this Heat, said I, I counsel you to stifle your Resentment, unless you can disarm this pretended Adversary, confute his Evidence, or deny the Charge; for after all, tho' People abandon Virtue, few have the Impudence to burlesque it; its Interest is not quite sunk; Conscience and Shame have not lost all Footing; and tho' it be not uncreditable to commit an ill Action, it's infamous, at least, to defend it. If the Gentleman's Charity challenges not Thanks, I am sure it deserves not reviling; it should strike out some Sparks

Sparks of Repentance, and not kindle Flames of Anger : He tells you, you post on to Damnation, and desires you to stop : Is it such an Incivility to interpose ? Did we see a blind Man upon the Brink of a Precipice, should we not admonish him of the Danger, and speed to his Assistance ?

Young Gentlemen, hoodwink'd by Passion, and fascinated by the bewitching Blandishments of sensual Pleasures, take not only the most easy, but the shortest Road to endless Torments ; he cries out, Stop, and you question his Commission, and formalize upon the Legality of his Proceeding ; your Danger, dear Sir, on the one Side, and Charity on the other, are his Warrant ; nay, and the Principles of that Religion you prostitute to Lewdness, are his Justification and Protection.

Indeed he has drawn some disproportioned Characters, but the Fault lies not in the Painter, but in the Original ; the Gentleman had no Intention to provoke any Man's Resentment, or to expose his Person ; he hath blended a thousand different Faces together, so that this Confusion of Features and Complexions will conceal the Originals. In short, Sir, I counsel you rather to mend than to storm ; if you will not apply the Remedy, thank at least the Gentleman that presents it.

But however, the Spark would come to no Terms of Accommodation with Eusebius, he would post him up for a Pedant, and pronounce him a presuming Coxcomb in all Places, and all Company : Thus this poor Man overlook'd nothing in Ill-nature, or worse Manners, and strain'd his Resentments to all the Heights of Folly and Madness ; but he fancied in Eusebius's Character he saw his own ; and so to clear his Complexion, and brighten his Features, he would break the Glass, as if the Deformity lay in the Medium, and not in his Face.

Thus some People attack Godliness under every Form, they give Virtue no Quarter, and Vice no Disturbance ; they have banish'd Goodness from Practice, and will not suffer it to appear even upon Paper : No, no, Conscience must have no Retreat, and God no Worship. Certainly

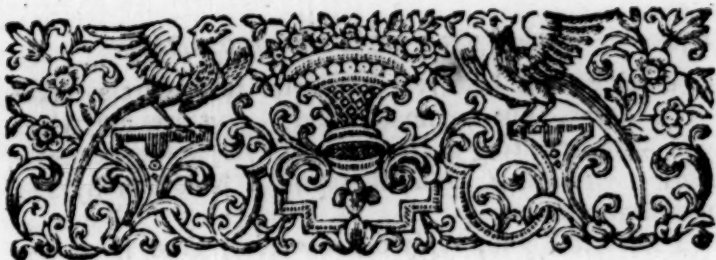
in these Mens Opinions, Hell is a Place of Diversion, and Heaven of Torments.

But, Gentlemen, I hope the sober Part of you will receive this Present with more Civility, and if you cannot resolve to imitate the Pattern, I am confident you will at least commend it. I have mingled his *Actions* with his *Precepts*, and so have at the same time thrown before you a *Scheme* of his *Practice*, and an *Essay* of his *Documents*; you will at one View see what he did, and read what he taught; and then we must conclude, Gentlemen are far gone in *Wickedness*, if both *Reason* and *Example* are unable to recover them.

The Way to Virtue by Precept, says Seneca, is long, by *Example* short; this affects more strongly than *Speculation*; it enlivens our *Spirits*, and prepares them for *Action*; the *Prospect* of hazardous *Enterprises* oftentimes damps *Courage*, and dispirits *Bravery* itself; but when we see Men undertake it with *Valour*, and come off with *Success*, we envy the *Hero*, and applaud the *Action*; we then conclude that things are feasible that seem impossible, and that oftentimes the very *Difficulty* lies more in the *Fancy* than in the *Attempt*.

Flesh and Blood paint *Virtue* in a frightful Dress, and the *Duties* of a *Christian* in the Garb of a *Fury*; they seem *Monsters* to the *Nobility*, more fit to be gazed on than practised, and rather scare than invite. *Eusebius* has discovered the *Imposture*, and unmasked the *Artifice*; he has convinc'd the *World* by *Practice*, that *Virtue* has nothing hideous but a false *Vizor*, and that the *Duties* of a *Christian* are no *Nuisance*, that our *Maker* never intended to bind us up to *Disadvantage*, nor to turn our *Duty* into our *Misfortune*. The *Office* of a *Christian* in this great *Man* interfered not with that of a *Gentleman*; his *Behaviour* was handsome, and his *Carriage* religious; he kept up a continual *Correspondence* with *God*, without breaking off all *Commerce* with *Men*. In a *Word*, he lived both a *Gentleman* and a *Saint*; loved by most, and admir'd by all.

T H E



THE
GENTLEMAN INSTRUCTED, &c.

PART III.

DIALOGUE I.

Young Gentlemen are dissuaded from a Town Life.

TH O' the Dispute was over, the Controversy went on. *Theomachus* was indeed too weak to keep his Ground, but too stubborn to ask Quarter. He durst not boast of Victory, and would not acknowledge his Defeat; so that in conclusion he was willing to draw Stakes, and confess'd that both maintain'd their Post with equal Resolution. In fine, (said he with a Smile) *Eusebius* and I fought here, as our *Allies* and the *French* at *Luzara*: Both are Conquerors, and both overcome. I give him leave to clap his Wings, if he'll permit me to crow.

Neander was present at the Dispute, and by good Fortune in the Company, when *Theomachus* bolted out this *Rhodomontade*. His Confidence was extraordinary, and his Air unusually pretending. Passion flush'd in *Neander's* Face, and almost broke out at his Tongue. He had no Mind to renew the Combat; for he knew *Atheists* ever return Smiles for Reason, and keep their Ground rather by dint of Forehead than Argument. However, not to suffer him to be pleasant without Check;

I perceive, said he, you have run in a Circle, taken many Steps, but rid no Ground; you are just where you were in setting out; because, *for aught you know, there may be a God*, and then you a Madman by Demonstration.

I have told you, reply'd *Theomachus*, God is an airy Being, the Child of Fancy, and Spawn of Imagination, a Bugbear to awe Fools, and fright Children; and if *Eusebius* has hector'd much on this Subject, he has proved little. For, Sir, I distinguish between Flourish and Argument; between starch Cant, and solid Reason.

It may be so, answer'd *Neander*, but if his Reason for a God comes not up to Evidence, yours for no God (by your own Confession) falls short of Demonstration. For in a Word, Sir, *It's a drawn Battle*. It's therefore no less probable there is a God, than that there is none; and by consequence you must commence Fool, to remain an *Atheist*.

Theomachus was pinch'd for an Answer, and therefore he retreated to the last Retrenchment of bas'd *Liber-tines*, Raillery and Satire. For you must know these Gentlemen bite when they cannot speak to the Purpose, and laugh down those Arguments they cannot reason out of Countenance.

Your Logic, young Man, said he, is as callow as your Chin, and your Understanding as soft as your Beard. Leave Philosophy to thumb the *Grammar*, rub over *Propria quæ Maribus*, before you venture on Divinity; your Intellect is pen-feathered, too weak-wing'd to soar so high: A Dog or a Racer are more proper Entertainment for your Age, than God. And I presume you are more able to judge of Wine, than of Theological Niceties.

Nay, said *Neander*, if Age be the Standard of Sense, and Arguments are measured not by Mood and Figure, but Beards, then certainly all the Advantage lies on your side; but under Favour, Sir, Beards and Reason go not always together. Age is not the Measure of Truth and Falshood. Threescore may be in the wrong, and Twenty in the right: Fling therefore Years out of the

the Question, and come up close to the Point. But *Theomachus* thought fit to drop the Controversy, and withdrew, while the Way lay open for a Retreat. The Difficulty pinch'd, and he had no colourable Answer in reserve. And therefore being in no Condition to withstand his Adversary, he took the Liberty to condemn him. And indeed, this petty Policy is a wonderful Relief to a sinking Courage. It lays a Varnish of Generosity on Cowardice, and gives Fear the Colour of Good-nature.

Theomachus was no more for drawn Battles; he saw, that by drawing Stakes, he should lose the Set. And therefore (to cry up his Party, and his expiring Credit) he proclaim'd himself Conqueror, and his Adversary defeated. *Eusebius*, said he, is slipt into the Country to air his Brains, and to throw off the Chagrine that always discomposes routed Generals. He dares not keep the Field, but cantons his scatter'd Forces in Villages.

Eusebius indeed had bid adieu to the Town, with a Resolution never to return. He was sick of Company, and more of those Follies he could neither endure, nor correct. He could not without Indignation behold Christians lead the Lives of Pagans, and profane the best Religion with the foulest Crimes. *What Pleasure*, said he, *can a Christian take in a Place where Vice rides in Triumph, and Virtue groans in a Dungeon; where Goodness lies under Contempt, and Irregularity receives Applause; where the best Actions are lampoon'd, and the worst deisid?*

Neander rid over to his House, five Miles only distant from the Town. He inform'd him of *Theomachus's* Comportment since his Retreat; with what an Air of Confidence he proclaim'd his Victory: That the Cabal began to hold up their Heads and crow: that *Atheism* had almost recovered of its Wound, and began to walk Abroad: That his Presence might stop the Evil his Absence would give Opportunity to spread: that *Theomachus* would withdraw at his Arrival, and carry his Poison and Impudence into the Country.

Alas ! reply'd *Eusebius*, Dear *Neander*, you are unacquainted with the Temper of *Atheists*. It's easy to confound 'em, but almost impossible to convert 'em ; their Disease lies in the Heart, not in the Head. Their Misfortune takes its Rise from Obstinacy, not Ignorance. And how can you reason a Man out of Infidelity, who resolves to remain in it against Reason ? Libertinism, *Neander*, is a bewitching Thing, when it gets the Ascendant ; 'twill improve Ignorance for an Excuse of Freedom ; cast Conscience into a Lethargy, and bribe the Understanding against our own Interest. In a Word, it's a Sin seldom forgiven in this World, and never in the other.

Atheism, replied *Neander*, is not the only Vice of the Town, other Sins seem free of the City, and Men endeavour to dilate the Malignity, and to keep the Disorder in Countenance. If People have the face to preach up Ungodliness in Discourse, and Practice plant both against it ; good Counsel, back'd by Example, may do as much Execution upon Vice, as bad upon Virtue. In the next World, indeed, Mens Wills are either fixt in Good or Evil, but in this they may pass from one Extream to the other. Besides, all are not so charm'd with Sin, as to persuade themselves it deserves no Punishment, nor so out of Conceit of Virtue as to discard it of all Reward : Their Misfortune springs rather from Weakness than Malice ; from youthful Heat, than from Infidelity. Time will cool their Blood, and Instruction may inform their Understanding ; and when this is disabus'd, the Will shakes off the Enchantment.

What can Advice, said *Eusebius*, signify to those who are always more prepared to curse or ridicule the Adviser, than to practise the Counsel ? To those who are unman'd by Effeminacies, and even nailed to ill Habits ? They are without Conscience, without Principles, how will you come at them ? You may almost as soon preach down a Hurricane, or declaim Tempest into a Calm, as counsel a bad Man into a good one. Whilst we frame ill Notions of the future State, our Lives will hardly be regular. What hope of Recovery when the Patient

Patient dotes on the Disease, when he flies in the Face of the Doctor, and suspects every Cordial to be a Dose of Arsenic or Ratsbane? In a Word, the Malignity of the Fever works up to Madness; and, like some Bedlams, they suppose themselves the Wisdom of the Nation.

I suppose, indeed, that all who throw up their Innocence, and pawn Heaven for Pleasure, have not quite taken leave of Religion, or dismiss'd Principles; but *they have* Moses and the Prophets, Pastors and Teachers: I am not Curate-General, nor intend to interfere with another's Function: Those who tend the Sick are often struck with the Infection, and the Doctor that cures his Patient sometimes dies of his Distemper.

What! said *Neander* with a Smile, you are on Guard against the Infection of the Town: Surely you have outliv'd Temptation. Age has so congeal'd your Blood, that nothing but a *Christmas-block* is able to thaw it. Neither the World nor Devil can work up thy Humours to Irregularity. Thy Passions, like Serpents in a Frost, drop their Venom; they move without Vigour, and almost without Life: They are so far from capering, that like Criminals in Trammels, they can scarce stand. To have one Foot in the Grave, and the other in the Brothel is unusual. Few Men, like *Aetna*, burn within, when they are Snow without. A white Head and a glowing Heart seldom meet.

No Man, reply'd *Eusebius*, is secure, and therefore all should stand upon the *Qui va la?* Age, indeed, is less expos'd than Youth, but it's not above Danger; and I have known some carry their Disorders on to fourscore. They spurred on Nature, jaded by Age, and rid down by a long Course of Excesses, till it sunk under the Burthen, and went off the Stage both with Shame and Sin, scorn'd by Men, and tormented by the Omnipotent.

It's therefore our Duty to withdraw from ill Example and not to come within sight of Occasions. Like the-Basilisk, they kill with their very Sight, and the Poison is too quick for a Remedy. Fly therefore, dear *Neander*, the Town; Temptation seconded by Youth,

and sharpened by Idleness, will be too hard for Precept. *Lot* found Safety in the Country, and his Wife Death for looking back upon the unfortunate City. God has left this sad Example for a Caveat to Posterity, to have no Commerce with Sinners, lest by Conversation we espouse their Crimes, and partake of their Punishment.

And indeed when young People fix in Town, they glean up its Vices, and continue the Practice, till their Estates founder, and their Bodies sink under the Weight of their Disorders. Unthinking Creatures ! They sport in the Camp of their Enemies ; Danger surrounds them, and what is worse, either unseen or unregarded. Temptation assaults them not with the Violence of an Enemy, but the Caresses of a Friend. This throws them off their Guard, disarms Cautions, and gives them up to the Government of Carelessness ; so that they surrender without Resistance, and sigh in Fetters before they dream of an Enemy. Nay, one would think they lost their Wits with their Liberty, and commenc'd Fools the same Moment they become Slaves. For they fancy themselves the only free Subjects in the Nation, because they are not coop'd up between four Walls ; and dote on their Captivity, because they hector in Taverns, and rattle in gilt Coaches. But, alas ! these pleasing Fancies, are the Effect of a dozing Opiate of the Devil's Malice, not of his Kindness : He regales his Friends, as the *Indians* do their Slaves, merely to prepare them for Slaughter.

Now these Men turned into Sense, are unqualified for good Counsel ; you may as soon reason a Swine out of the Mire, as these into Sobriety and Temperance. They'll carry on their Brutalities in spite of all the Sermons they hear, and make over the Lord's-Day to the Devil.

We have indeed Committees for the Improvement of Piety, as well as for that of Trade. And so have made Provisions for the Interest of God, no less than for that of the Nation. But, alas ! If our Censors deserve Censure, Reformation will be at a stand ; their Example will do more Execution on Vice than their Office :

fice : And their Practice would carry on more heartily the Interest of Virtue, than their Commission. A Man that flings his Estate into a Miss's Lap, will not be fined out of her Company with forty Shillings ; and he who leaps over the Laws of God, will scarce boggle at *Acts of Parliament*.

In fine, *Neander*, our Town Sparks are a monstrous Generation, a kind of Centaur, half Man, and half Beast. They have the Shape of the First, and all the Brutality of the Second ; they follow the Stream of Inclination like Beasts ; they chop at any thing that gratifies Sense. But then they switch on Nature, and here they leave the Beast to play the Fiend. Immortal Spirits seem tied to all the infamous Impressions of Flesh and Blood, and bind themselves Slaves to the Devil in this Life, for Pleasure in Hand, and eternal Torments in Reversion.

Had you a Vote in the House, or a Place at the Board, said *Neander*, you would be for a Proclamation to clear the Town of all the young Gallants above Fifteen, and under Thirty.

When a Gentleman's Business, reply'd *Eusebius*, lies in Town, I would not have him take Coach for the Country. For at such a Distance things would not go on kindly. The Man and his Business, like Man and Wife, must live together : Separate Dwellings, require a separate Maintenance. Now when we double Expences, Accounts seldom run even : Those who have Offices at *White-Hall*, may take up Lodgings in *Spring-Garden* or *Pall-mall* ; who intend to build a Fortune upon the Law, may take up in the *Inns of Court* : And if they are for Trade, they must pack off to *Wapping* or *Cheapside*.

But, I confess, I would not have those come nearer than *Hampstead* or *Hounslow-Heath*, who have no other Business than Diversion ; for they will certainly idle away their Time, mortgage their Souls to the Devil, and their Estates to Misses, Vintners, and Lawyers.

Idleness, dear *Neander*, is a dangerous Disease under all the Elevations ; but it's mortal at *London*. It's not only the Mother, but the Mistress of Vice. *Multam enim Malitiam docuit Otiositas*. Ecclus. Chap. xliiii. A Man

that has nothing to do, has Leisure to do any thing: He lies open to all Temptations, and what is worse, is unprepared for a Defence; like a dismantled Town, he falls into the Hands of the first Invader.

Indeed at his first Arrival Business flows in upon him: One would think he sat at the Helm, and steered the weighty Concerns of the *English* Monarchy. The first Secretary of State is in a less Hurry on Post Days, and sends about fewer Dispatches. For you must know he subpœna's *Semstresses*, *Tailors*, *Barbers*, and *Coach-makers*, to appear at his Levee; one would fancy this heterogenous Junctio took into Consideration *ardua Regni Negotia*, they play at *pro* and *con* with such Heat and Commotion. Now all this Noise is nothing but a learned Debate upon the Modes of the Town, and an advantageous Mixture of Colours. He is for Delicacy and Exactness of Fancy, for nothing tawdry and mechanic, flaunting or ill matcht. And Doctors are divided upon the Point; but all agree to bubble the Squire. For it's a kind of *Postulatum* among the Beaus, that nothing is modish that is not dear; nay, the Goodness even of Snuff rises with the Price, and *Tobacco* at five Guineas the Pound is twenty Times better than the same at a Crown.

I knew a Spark that sat a whole Morning in a close Committee with a Barber: Now this mighty Consultation was about a Perriwig. He shew'd him Twenty, but one was too long, another too short; this too full, that too thin: At last, *Sirrah*, says the Youngster, *make me a smart Wig, a smart one, ye Dog*. The Fellow blest himself; he had heard of a smart Nag, a smart Man, &c. but a smart Wig was *Chinese* to the Tradesman. However nothing would please his Worship, but *smart Shoes*, *smart Hats*, and *smart Cravats*: Within two Days he had a *smart Wig*, with a smart Price in the Box. The Truth is, he had been bred up with the Groom, and transplanted the Stable-dialect into the Dressing-room.

Was he a Gentleman, said *Neander*? A Gentleman, answer'd *Eusebius*; yes, of a Family more ancient than the *Norman* or *Saxon* Conquest: He was of the *La Fools*

Fools of the North, allied to the eldest Branch of the *La Fools of Essex*.

Now let us suppose his Equipage compleat, and his Grand Concern over; his next Business is to confute *Job's* Aphorism, *Man is born to Labour*. No, he is a thing made merely for Sport and Pleasure; he fancies God has assign'd him no other Employment than to live at Random, without Law, without Restraint. And altho' God has given every part of the Creation a convenient Post, he seems a Mute placed in view merely for Light and Parade. You must not therefore wonder I attempt not to define his Calling, seeing he will not pretend to any.

One weighty Affair calls upon him every Morning, viz. *How he shall saunter away the Day*. This is a *moot Point*, and requires Plodding and Application; and indeed he dwells upon the Subject till a considerable part of the Day is past, before he can take a final Resolution how to pass it. Nay, with less Pains he might have employ'd the whole Day well, than in the very Deliberation of spending it ill.

For pray imagine not the Practice of any Christian Virtue falls under Debate, where he shall hear Prayers, or where a Sermon. Alas! Those Duties lie below the Sphere of a Gentleman who pretends to the Garb and Freedom of the Town; he might have discharg'd them in his Country Parish, without the Expence of a flaunting Equipage, or the Fatigue of a tedious Journey. And you may take this for a Principle, that Devotion never coach'd a young Man to Town, nor gave him a Surfeit of the Country. Liberty, Pleasure, and downright Debauchery allure him thither; these command him, as God did *Abraham*, to forsake House and Relations, to turn Tenant, though he was Lord Proprietor in the Country.

The Morning is divided between the Pillow and the Toilet, and this is the most important as well as the most innocent Employment of the Day. The Folly is much greater than the Sin: For what can be more foolish than for a Man to espouse the Weakness of a Woman? To take Pains to be laught at? To drain his Pocket to

make himself cheap and ridiculous? However, you may with more Ease harangue a Peacock out of his Brains, than a Town-Spark out of his Gaundry: He will appear in Print, and convince the World that Finery and Folly are near allied.

And now his Friends crowd in to give him the *bon jour*, these are a kind of *partie bleu*, that *marode* upon new Comers, with Commission from Indigence and Necessity. They have rioted away their Conscience, met and diced away their Estates, and now graze upon the Common. Their Honesty runs lower than their Pockets, and their Confidence over-shoots Impudence. Their Crimes are as public as their Debts, and their Religion keeps pace with their Morals; they scorn to fling even a Varnish over the foulest Disorders, and will not go to the Expence of civil Hypocrisy. In fine, they are a Blemish to their Family, a Nuisance to the Town, and a Scandal to Conversation.

These Sparks, like the Steward in the Gospel, *cannot dig, and will not beg*: And altho' Adam was condemned to live by the Sweat of his Brows, they resolve to make a Figure by that of their Conscience. At the first Sight of a raw Gentleman, they fly at him like a Vulture at the Quarry, and for the same End also, to prey first upon his Virtue, then upon his Money; how many Nets do they lay to ensnare the Squire, and knave themselves? They ply him with Visits, study his Temper, and strike in with his Inclination. They swear his Wit is without Parallel; his Behaviour above Imitation; that *a je ne scay quoy* runs through every Motion, which charms and astonishes. In fine, that he is the very Top of his Species. The poor Gentleman, unpractised in the Dialect of the Town, takes these Compliments for *Consent*; he supposes himself in *Yorkshire*, where the Tongue and the Heart go together, where Thoughts and Words look the same Way. Now this City-incense sends out a most grateful Flavour, but it is too strong for a Country Brain. It turns his Head, and smoaks him out of Sense and Reason; he fancies himself a Cubit higher; he walks in the Clouds, and values himself not by the Pound, but, like Diamonds, by the *Caract.*

In a Word, he flings himself into their Arms, and gives himself up to their Direction. And then you may be sure he meets with the Fate of the Sheep in the Fable, who dismiss the Dogs to graze under the Protection of the Wolves; for a Libertine is a Devil once removed, or at least his Deputy; nay, he is ten times more mischievous by Proxy, than in Person. People of themselves are prone enough to Laziness, Lewdness, and Extravagance, but these add Biass to Nature; they provoke Passion by Precept, and whet Appetite by the Charms of Glory and Reputation; they school him out of all the Revelations in the Gospel, and debauch him in Principle and Practice; for *Sceptics* have faint Notions of God, and consequently none of Conscience; they have no Relish of Virtue, and lie under no moral Restraints from Hope or Fear: So that they have nothing to do, but to indulge their Inclinations, to gratify Sense, to fill their Pockets with one Hand, and to empty them with the other. Now to take in a Gentleman's Money, you must first beat down all Principles of Morality, you must draw a Scheme of Gentility by the Rules of *Epicure*; and if you can persuade him he is only free of the Town, when he has discharged Conscience, and sent back Religion into the Country, you may rook him out of his Estate with the same Facility you have raked him into Debauchery.

For this reason they take care to inform him of all the Embellishments of a Town-Gentleman, without any Mention of the Duties of a Christian. They tell him, that Wit is the best Quarter in a Gentleman's Escutcheon, and that he must bid fair for a Place among the *Virtuoso's*, but that Profaneness is the shortest Cut to this Preferment, and the best Standard of Sense and Breeding, *i. e.* his Wit must be as wretched as his Manners. When he is pinch'd for a Reason, he must bolt out a Jest; *that* fits well enough on a Pedant, *this* on a Gentleman, provided it be tip'd with Impudence, and pointed with Boldness; that he must beware of that vulgar Error, *Religion*, because it cramps Freedom, pals the Spirits, and coops up Liberty in strait Compass; that he must be sure to be out of the Reach of

Scruples,

Scruples, and above the Follies of Remorse. Now such Principles, driven on by Example, easily lead him into Excesses; and these help on the Belief of the Doctrine; so that by a kind of mutual Priority, the one serves for a Vehicle to the other.

Indeed, at the beginning, Debauchery lies hard upon his Stomach; he pukes, and is crop-sick; but Practice and Wine carry off the Distemper, and then the Soul becomes case-hardened; he is so far from blushing at his Disorders, that he thinks Ambition a Reputation for Debauchery; he charges himself with false Impieties, and usurps Wickednesses he is only guilty of by his Boasting.

And now being sleight in Sin, he bounds from one Disorder to another, and turns not only a Day, but the whole Year into a mad sort of *Bacchanalia*. Other Trades have some Weeks of a Vacation, but his goes on the very *Sundays*; and generally his Profaneness rises with the Holiness of the Day. His first Jaunt is to a Treating-house; here he trespasses upon all the Rules of Temperance and Sobriety; he over-charges his Stomach with Ragoufts, and his Head with Wine; Appetite runs away with Reason, Sensuality with Shame, and he fancies he only drinks like a Man, when he sinks into the Beast. Men should eat and drink to live, but he inverts the Primitive Institution, and seems only to live for the Satisfaction of his Palate: He would never die, yet plunges into Excesses, as if Life were a Burthen; for he is never well till he falls sick of a Surfeit, and almost out of his Wits, till he has drowned them in Claret.

From the Table he removes to Play, and leaves the Glass to handle the Dice; when a Gentleman has drunk away his Reason, he generally flings his Money after it; for he cannot justify himself to the Fashion, nor keep up to the Character, unless his Purse be as light as his Head; and he is haunted by a Brigade of Sharpers, who ply at his Pocket, and give no more Quarter to his Guineas, than to their own Conscience. They cruise upon Gentlemen like Parties in *Flanders* upon Passengers. Poverty and Luxury seal their Commission; and what they seize by one Crime, they throw away by another.

another. One would take them for *Craesus's* by their Expences, and for Cutpurves by their Filching.

At first they suffer him to win to invite him to lose, and by Good-luck decoy him into bad ; but then the Wind chops into another Corner : Fortune submits to Cogging, and the Deceit over-reaches Play. A thousand Curses fly after Good-luck, but are unable to recall it, so that at once he is bankrupted of Patience, Money and Grace ; however he will not sit down with his Loss, he supposes Fortune continues never long in the same Humour ; that if she frowns To-day, she must smile To-morrow : Away then he goes to a second Rendezvous, but alas, the Desire of retrieving his Losses, only serves to enhance them : He seldom discovers the Deceit, till nothing is left to be cheated of ; nor even suspects Over-reaching, till Caution comes too late.

By this time he has dined himself sober, and the Fumes of Chagrin have mastered those of Wine. Nothing but a Comedy can dispel the Glooms that rise from an empty Pocket. Away then they drive to the Theatre ; and here Vice attacks him by the Eyes and the Ears too ; he sees almost the very secret Mysteries of the Stews, and hears all the Blasphemies of the Damned ; here Lewdness is spoken, not in *double Entendres*, but plain *English* ; there are Paraphrase and Comment upon the Text, and Folly is shewn without Caution or Reserve.

Comedy, they say, was design'd by Pagan *Athens* to instruct Youth, and to teach the Baseness of Vice by its Punishment : But in Christian *London* it tends directly to debauch People all manner of ways : For this Reason good Men are lash'd, and ill rewarded ; Virtue appears in Sackcloth, and Vice in Embroidery ; Rakes go off with Success, and sober Men with Disappointment ; the Devil and the Poet chop upon the same Favourite, and his Fortune always rises with his Lewdness. Nay, those of the best Quality in the Play are always the worst Christians ; they glitter in Equipage, and are dignified with Escutcheon, and often with Patent to enable Vice : To persuade People that the Blemishes of Human Nature make up its Perfection, and that Gentlemen and Reprobates are made of the same

Metal. Now who can be good under such strong Provocations to Evil? Who will pretend to Regularity, when they must blush for their Resolution; and cannot avoid Reproach unless they deserve it? Believe me, Neander, when a Gentleman is pinch'd with this dangerous Dilemma, *I must either forfeit my Character or my Innocence*; it's odds he will rather drop this than put that to a venture; for it goes hard when one must turn lewd as it were in his own Defence, and can expect no Quarter, unless he hangs out the Colours of Libertinism and Irreligion, and boasts of those Crimes he is only guilty of in Appearance.

Now though such hideous Flights of Profaneness, such Heights of Obscenity, and Strains of Religion would be all Penance and Mortification to Christians, yet they are not only permitted, but applauded by the Nobility of both Sexes, and the Standard of their Approbation is often the Indecency of the Poem: Nothing is supposed soft, unless it be rotten; and all those Pieces are damned by the Spectators, that damn not the Audience. When the most flaming Impieties are thus received with Transport on the Stage, are they not stamp'd as it were with public Authority? And when the worst Actions are most esteemed, who will boggle at the Practice that brings both Credit and Pleasure? It's certain the Charms of the Theatre are no less transforming than those of *Circe*, it enchants Men out of their Species, they leave their Reason behind them, and carry Brutality to their Lodgings; it destroys all Principles of Religion and Morality; it countenances Atheism, and places the Glory of Gentlemen in the Infamy of Human Nature; it sullies the Imagination, boils up the Humours, and fires the Passions; and when it has thus started the Game, and Flesh and Blood pampered by high-feeding, and supplied with Money, will follow the Chace; and you may take it for granted that *London* is better (I mean worse) stock'd with *Thais's* than *Lucretia's*: Youth and Coin make prostitute Women, as well as debauch'd Men, and the Play-house serves not only for a School to Prostitution, but for a Nursery also to the Stews; nay, and sometimes to *Bethlem*.

Now

Now when a young Gentleman is drench'd in Brutality ; when criminal Amours take the Ascendant, he is undone to all Intent and Purpose ; for when Love flies high, Reason runs low ; and whosoever has made over his Heart to a Miss, seldom keeps his Wits ; he lies open to all the Assaults of Artifice and Avarice, and his Soul becomes as bestial as his Pleasures, he can think of nothing that is generous or manly. So that in Conclusion, he has no more of the Man, than of the Christian.

To comprehend all in a little ; a Town-Spark is a kind of *Corinthian* Brass ; this is a Mixture of all Metals, and he a Compound of all Disorders ; he is a little Antichrist, *Homo Peccati*, a Man of Sin ; and this, like the Devil in the Gospel, is call'd *Legion* ; he plies between the Tavern and the Play-house, and then turns off to the *Groom-Porters*, or the *Stewes* ; in one place he drops his Wits, in the other his Money, and every where his Innocence. So that the Devil lodges mostly in his Pocket, and always in his Soul. He has the Shape of a Man, and all the Inclinations of Beasts ; his Study is to flush the most agreeable Objects of Sense, and his whole Satisfaction to enjoy 'em ; he stands not upon the Niceties of Decency, nor formalizes upon the Notions of Good and Evil. Pleasure is the Rule, as well as the End of his Actions ; and although he be unable to satisfy one Passion, he endeavours to glut them all. When he can devise no new Crime, he entertains his Thoughts on the Ideas of past Diversions, and so debauches his very Memory, as well as his Will, and commits imaginary Sins, which, unrepented, will be revenged with real Torments.

I confess, said *Neander*, if the Original holds up to this Copy, a Town-Spark has more of the Monster than of the Man ; and I would no more come within the Air of the City, than of a Pest-House. But certainly you over-flourish upon an ill Subject, and paint 'em in more disadvantageous Colours than Nature made 'em, such Creatures are found in Fancy only, not in Life ; and I believe Satire has drawn some black Strokes upon Practice. Without doubt young Gentle-
men

men are not all Saints; nor are they all Fiends; some may live better, and others worse.

Indeed, *Neander*, replied *Eusebius*, I have drawn the young Men of the Town in worse Colours than Nature made 'em, but not so bad as they have made themselves. Cast a transient Glance on those of your Acquaintance, and you will confess our Age swarms with *Borborites*, as well as the preceding, who rowl in Mire, like Swine, of the most hideous Sensualities; having shaken off the Yoke of Obedience to Parents, they break through the Commandments of God; scorn all Guides, but Temerity; all Law, but the Liberty to follow every Impulse of Passion; all Labour, but that of the Devil, to plunge themselves into eternal Flames, and others with 'em, that they may find Companions in Punishment, as well as in Pleasure.

But pray, what is this to the Town? answered *Neander*: In spite of Provocation to Evil, Men may live with Regularity in the very Liberties of the City; if therefore they deviate from their Duty, leave the Fault at their own Door, and charge not the Town with their Extravagances. I grant, Temptations are frequent, and often violent; but then these polish Virtue, as Fire purifies Gold. Virtue, till it be brought to the Touchstone, has often more Lustre than Solidity, and all its Value hangs on the Surface; but when it stands its Ground in spite of Provocation, and bears up against the Torrent of Flesh and Blood, it then appears like the Sun in its Meridian, in Pomp and Glory.

Without doubt, said *Eusebius*, London Air has no Influence on Man's Free-will; it lays under no Restraint, no fatal Necessity. Man is Master of his Choice, in one Place as well as in another; but what avails a Power to live well, with a Will to live ill? A Man must lie under the irrevocable Sentence of Damnation to sin merely for Sin's sake. Such a Strain of Malice is above the reach of the most daring Debauchee: Interest, Ambition, and criminal Pleasures, are the great Incentives to Vice, these rouse Appetite, enliven the Passions, and then subdue the Will. Now where do these Temptations take up their Lodgings, but in the Town? Here they are set off with all the Charms of State and Grandeur;

Grandeur ; and then, besides, they persecute Youth, not with Frowns, but Smiles, and kill with Kindness.

But you tell me, Temptation polishes Virtue, and distinguishes Sterling from Artifice and Appearance. Great and Good ! why don't you take a turn in a Pest-house, to try the Strength of your Constitution, or in an Hospital to air your Lungs ? By all means ; young Men should step into a Brothel to refine their Chastity, and into a Tavern to practise Temperance and Sobriety. Dear Sir, the Way to secure Virtue is not to expose it ; come not within Sight of Temptation : It's a short Passage from being provoked to Evil, and doing it : Fear is a better Guardian of Piety than Confidence, and more Men have forfeited it by Temerity than Caution.

But certainly, said *Neander*, London is not composed of *Taverns, Brothels, and Theatres*. Gentlemen may visit more regular Places, and sling away their Time on Diversions less dangerous and more innocent.

Yes, reply'd *Eusebius*, they may visit a hundred and thirty Churches, and I assure you this Jaunt would take much Time off their Hands ; but alas ! their Business lies not within Sight of a Chapel ; they may also cry about the Streets *Savealls* and *Charcoal*, or tug at an Oar between *Temple-bar* and *White-ball*. Or, in fine, they may steer by the Compass of Sir S—D—, who drove every Day in a stately Equipage to all the Toy-shops between *Piccadilly* and the *Royal-Exchange* ; he viewed every Thing, but bought nothing. The Gentleman would not do worse, but could not frame any Pastime better ; without doubt he play'd the Fool, but not the Rake ; he toy'd away his Time, yet kept his Money with his Innocence ; his Soul was little, though his Birth was great, and his Inclinations childish at Threescore. However, it's better to trifle, than to debauch away Time, and to be a Coxcomb, than a Reprobate. But such a Humorist is a *Phoenix*, the Birth and Wonder of an Age ; a Pair seldom meets in a Kingdom, and never in one City.

You take Things by the wrong Handle, said *Neander*, and represent them at a Disadvantage : If the Sun,

Sun, uninfluenced by inferior Bodies, has some Spots, what wonder a Town Life be waited on by some Inconveniences? I grant many Diversions are not innocent, yet all are not criminal. For Example; what harm in taking the fresh Air in *Hyde-Park*? And then in driving to a Concert of Music? These Entertainments are genteel, they unbend the Mind, refresh the Body, gratify the Senses, and have no Design upon Virtue.

I believe, answered *Eusebius*, the Air of *Hyde-Park* is more wholesome than that of *Cheapside*; and that a mouthful now and then may be as good for the Stomach as a Vomit; but then I am persuaded a Dose of Country Air would clear the Lungs, and carry off the Smoak from the *Thorax*, with less Expence and Danger. But do you think *Neander*, the *Beaus* and *Belles* have no other Business there, than to take a Cargo of fresh Air? Alas! this is only the Pretence, their Design is worse complexioned; these appear in the Height of Pomp and Equipage; and Care is taken to set off their Charms with all the Advantage of Fan and Artifice; they smother the Defects of Nature under a Varnish of Silk, and plain the Furrows, Time has sunk in their Faces with Pomatums; the Ring is a kind of *Noah's Ark*; there are *seven unclean Creatures*, for *two clean*. Ladies of Honour ride pell-mell with those of Pleasure, and you will scarce distinguish them but by their Equipage; for you must know a Miss out-glitters my Lady; she runs away with the Wife's Jewels, as well as with the Husband's Heart, and commands his Purse with no less Empire than his Person.

Now pray, *Neander*, tell me, is here no Danger for a young Man, who is haunted by Passion, and leaves Thinking at home? May not Love fly from one Coach into another? And may not an Intrigue begun in public, be improved in private to Prostitution? In a Conflux of both Sexes, many meet upon ill Designs; and when some are disposed to sell Pleasure, and others to purchase it, they seldom disagree upon the Price; in a Word, I do not say a Turn in the *Park* is criminal, yet often-times it's unsafe.

Though

Though I rank not the Love of Music among the Signs of Predestination, yet I am no Enemy to the Science. I am not even for banishing it the Churches. Methinks an Organ well touched gives a Majesty to the Duties of Religion, and rouses up the most drouzy Spirit to Devotion. I am not for turning Instrumental Music out of civil Conversation; nor do I think, with *Plato*, that the *Violin* or *Harp* have such an Influence on the Government, that one String more would untune the Commonwealth. I believe the *Ephori* of *Lacedæmon* had little Business on their Hands, when they stinted the Lute-strings, and that the Senate deserved rather to be laughed at for seizing the Fiddle, than *Timotheus* to be blamed for exceeding the public Allowance.

However, it's certain airy Music raises sportive Humours, and tunes the Spirits to Diversion; it awakens Passion, warms the Blood, animates Fancy, and opens it to Pleasure. Indeed it's not directly vicious; yet how far it may contribute to Vice, those who haunt those Places are the most competent Judges; but the vocal Music is lewd to Scandal, and irreligious to Excess; here you have Lewdness in *Folio*, crowded in a *Couplet*, and an *Iliad* of Mischief in a *Nut-shell*.

The Subject is always profane or amorous, and both to the Height of the Poet's Fancy; it's better in Rhime and Metre to help the Memory of the Audience; it's garnish'd with Wit, to make a deep Impression on the Intellect; so that here is Arsenic thrown into Ratf-bane, Poison upon Poison; and besides, an airy Tune, and a fine Voice, serve for a Vehicle; they gild the Dose, take off the Unpalatableness of the Potion, and infuse Pleasure and Transport; when Lewdness is worked up with Verse and Music, the Mischief rises; these drive it stronger upon Fancy and Practice.

But if it be performed by a Woman, it's then Poison thrice boiled, mortal and sudden: It attacks not Virtue by Siege and Approaches, but, like Gun-powder, blows it up in a Moment; it's downright Provocation, for though she seems to vent the Poet's Thoughts, she warbles out her own, and covers her Amours under the

the fabulous Names of *Chloris* and *Sylvia*. A Woman that courts in Music, solicits in good earnest, and is either some Spark's Conquest already, or intends to make one. It's odds but she who sings ill Things, will do worse; now when the Inclination is engaged by a fine Voice, and melting Notes; when the Words recommend the Business of Lewdness, and the Sex pleads for it, whether Passion be not like to get the better of Duty, I leave, *Neander*, to your Consideration.

But certainly, Sir, replied *Neander*, Vice is not in so flourishing, nor Virtue in so sinking a Condition as you would persuade me; who would not think, by your Discourse, that Licentiousness and Impiety had called in the City Charter, and by a *Quo Warranto*, divested the Mayor and Aldermen of the Government to invade it themselves? You draw a Picture of *London* in as black Colours as the Scripture paints *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and represent the Inhabitants Sinners before the Lord from the highest to the lowest; but for all that a Gentleman may find sober and civil Company; and I am acquainted with Persons of Character, who make a Conscience of doing a bad Thing.

I met once, said *Eusebius*, a poor Fellow poring on a Book; well, *Tom*, said I, what Book hast thou there? The Bible, Master, replied *Tom*. The Bible, said I! it's a good Book. There is, no doubt, sober and civil Company in Town, *here and there*, if a body could but find it; but bad so prodigiously over-tops it both in Number and Quality, that there is no coming at it; like Gold in the Mine, it must be found by Sweat and Labour; and then too, you must remove a Tun of Dust for one Ounce of Oar.

I believe also, with *Tom*, that *here and there* a body may find a Conscience; but then you must be at the Charge of a Hue and Cry, or send the Constable with a Warrant upon the Expedition; for Conscience, of late, like Debtors, sculks in the Dark, or walks the Streets *incognito*; and then when you have arrested it in her Majesty's Name, a Man knows not what to make of it; it stands at Trifles, and breaks through Enormities;
strains

strains at a Flea, and swallows a Camel. T—H—took Check at a Companion for singing a harmless Air on the Lord's-day: *Eye, fye! I will not suffer, said he, the Sabbath to be thus profaned in my Presence.* Yet the next Sunday this very Conscience invited the Sabbath-breaker to a Brothel. This Gentleman had a Conscience, no doubt, but something in Disorder: One would have taken him for an *African Negro*, who places Beauty in Blackness, and Deformity in a clear Complexion. A gay Humour, in his Opinion, was a capital Crime, and Fornication an innocent Diversion. The Town and Liberties swarm with this Breed of Consciences; they are bought at easy Rates; nay, are become both a Drug and Nuisance to Commerce and Society.

I have, indeed, drawn *London* in black Colours; but methinks the Copy nicks the Original; and if it resembles *Sodom*, who can help it; the Fault lies in the Likeness of their Faces, not in the Painter. Indeed, I fear a *Portapolis* and a *London Beau* are of the same Alloy; true to Flesh and Blood, but false to Sobriety and Goodness. And then for the *Belles*, they are cast in the same Mould. Vanity, Balls, and Dressing, run away with the *Palestine Ladies* Thoughts, and do they not monopolize our *London Ladies* in time? In fine, the foreign Vices of both Sexes thrive in our Climate; and if *Syria* has set us a Pattern, *London* out-does the Original. You will tell me *London* is a reformed City, how then dare I compare the Excesses of a Christian People, with the hideous Disorders of *Pagans*? Is not this to set Idolatry above the Worship of the true God, and the Slaves of *Beelzebub* above the Children of *Jesus Christ*? By no means; our Belief is excellent, but our Manners stark naught; and this is the Riddle, that Men should profess Christ, and disown his Maxims; reverence his Person, and despise his Commands: This is in some Measure a forty-two Distinction, when Men honoured and fought for the King against the Tyranny of *Charles Stuart*, and broke the fundamental Laws of the Nation to maintain them.

Our Nation is a *Babel* of Religions, and the City a *Pantheon*: We have trick'd up Christianity in all Dresses, and modelled it to the Fancy of *French* and *English* Fanaticism. One would think we were upon the Discovery of new Passages into Heaven, as well as into the *South* and *Tartarean* Seas, or that each Man resolved to leave the High-road, to steal in at a By-lane.

Now when forty Religions snug under the Protection of the Law, few are really believed; for where Revelation is questioned, Practice will of course be brought to the Bar, and then it's odds, those Principles that favour Nature will get the Advantage over those that restrain it. Though therefore *London* be a reformed City, a Latitude of Faith draws after it a greater of Principles; and when these are rotten, how shall our Behaviour be found?

Well, said *Neander*, but suppose our Privy-Council thinks fit to banish, by Proclamation, young Gentlemen twenty Miles from the Town, will they remove out of the Reach of Vice, and stand clear of those Disorders that wait on a City Life? I fancy Vice is a Weed that over-runs Villages as well as Towns; and a Man who resolves to regale Appetite, may feast it in *Northumberland*; nay, and at a cheaper Rate too. Now, a low-seasoned Pleasure that costs but a Crown, relishes better, and raises a more agreeable Sensation on the Organ, than a high-spiced Satisfaction that cost twenty; and then for God's sake what Business have unsettled Gentlemen on their Hands in their Father's Houses? Do they not saunter away their Lives in Kennels and Stables, and run themselves down in the Chace of *Hares* and *Foxes*? So that living among Peasants and Beasts, they put on the Behaviour of those, and all the Brutality of these, and thus become half Man, half Beast: For, in a Word, a Country Gentleman is a Compound of much Pride, and little Merit, a Sultan in a small Parish, a Tyrant in *Busto*, and a Clown at length; he eats much, but drinks more; *March* Beer is his *Nectar*, and powder'd Beef his *Ambrosium*; and when he has lain some Neighbours on their Backs at the Barrel's Head, he shines in the Top of his Glory.

You

You mistake me, *Neander*, replied *Eusebius*, Laziness and Plenty live in Hamlets, as well as Cities, and Vice always makes a Part of their Retinue; there is no Sanctuary on this Side the Moon against Disorders; no Sin is a Prerogative only granted to Heaven; and though Grace and Caution may preserve us from Guilt, they don't from Danger.

But however, this Plague rages more in Town than in the Country, and carries off more there in one Parish in a Week, than here in a whole Country in a Twelvemonth. Temptations solicit, but bad Company spurs on to Wickedness. If in the Country Debauchery be sometimes practised, in Town it's openly professed; here are Schools and Academies of this *Black Art*, though not by Licence, yet at least by Connivance. Procureesses receive Stipends, and Gentlemen give Procreation-Money as well for their Pleasures, as their Play: In short, Wickedness is brought to Method, Principle, and Demonstration; and I fancy we shall take up again our Ancestors Trunk-breeches, before we lay down this detestable Science. Let us suppose a Country Gentleman is something too severe upon harmless Animals, is it not more pardonable to run down a Hare than an Estate? To worry a Fox than Conscience? Take things by the worst Handle, and you may say he rides, hunts, shoots, and saunters away his Life: But a Town Spark whores, blasphemes, drinks, dices away Health, Estate, and Soul into the Bargain. The Diversion of those are mean, of these vicious and criminal. Those might live better, and these cannot worse. This being so, the Disorders of the former come not within view of those of the latter; those spend their Time like Keepers, these like Fiends. Those fall below the Level of Gentlemen, and these of Christians.

What Remedy? says *Neander*: More Caution and less Ill-nature in Parents, answered *Eusebius*. Had they more Care of their Children, these might have more Sense of their Duty; there would be less Idleness in the World, and consequently less Vice. Let them apply betimes their younger Sons to some honest Calling, that they may beat out of Industry and Labour a handsome
Live-

Livelihood. This will employ their Thoughts, and their Time, and keep Temptation at a Distance. A Man that has honest Business on his Hands, seldom harbours dishonest Designs in his Heart: Besides, it secures his riper years. Nobility alone, as the World goes, is a slender Inheritance. Good Blood must have good Coin to appear significant, and make a Figure. A Gentleman that lives by his Wits must turn off Conscience, and will take leave of Religion. An Annuity of fifty Pounds *per Annum* sinks quickly to the Lees. An unlucky Throw of the Dice sets it a-tilt. And then a Miser's Stipend casts him at least two Years behind-hand. Poverty hangs heavy on all Men; it dispirits Courage, tempts Virtue, and dares a Man to be wicked; it casts him into Despair. Now a Gentleman cannot possibly fall into a worse Disease. For it dreads all Thoughts of Birth, Honour, and Virtue, and forces him either to turn Pad on the Road, or Sharper in Town; and then he ends his Days by the Sword or the Halter.

Parents must settle their Heir betimes: And it is more adviseable to do it a Year too soon, than a Month too late. The Care of a Family will take up a great Part of his Time, and of his Thoughts. And when they are tied to Business, they will scarce be at Leisure to pursue criminal Pleasures. Generally our Heart and our Concerns lodge in the same Apartment, and when these lie at home, that seldom stirs abroad.

T. J. was a young Gentleman of great Expectation. His Estate equalled his Birth, and his Endowments both. Nature had joined a graceful Presence to an extraordinary Wit. So that it was hard to determine, whether he stood more obliged to Providence for the Symmetry of his Body, or the Ornaments of his Soul. He was past one and twenty, and I used all my Interest with his Father to settle him. I told him, in all Probability, his Son would prove like the Prophet's Figs, either *very good*, or *very bad*, that his Complexion promised nothing ordinary. For he had great Passions, though his Education chained them: And if they got loose, they would drive him upon the greatest Extravagances.

vagances. A Match of 10,000 l. was proposed; and nothing remained to conclude it, but a Settlement of 500 l. *per Annum* in present upon the young Gentleman his Son. But the very word *Settlement* threw the old Gentleman off the Hinges, and scared him into all the Postures of Impatience; such Scenes of Extravagance are seldom seen in *Bethlem*. Never Man in his Wits better topt the Frenzies of a Madman. He was one of those who rave after Money, when they have least Use for it; and furnish their Pockets with great *Viaticums*, when they are almost at their Journey's end. I thought he was within an Ace of playing the *Desperado*, like *Apicius* the Roman, who stabbed himself with thirty thousand Pounds in Cash, out of an Apprehension of dying in Poverty, and thus not to die a Beggar, expired like a Madman. He was deaf to Advice, and Passion had quite mastered Reason. He still supposed the same Pen that signed the Conveyance, would write his Execution, that Life and Money would go together.

The young Squire talked both of his Mistress and his Money, took check, and over-acted the very Extravagances of his Father. He spurred to *London*, and left a thousand Curses behind him. Here he struck up with *Sharppers*, *Scourers*, and *Alsatians*. And to complete his Misfortune, made Acquaintance with the Players. He bounded from bad to worse, till he finished a Course of Debauchery, and undid himself to revenge his Father's Unkindness.

The old Gentleman seemed unconcerned at his Son's Misbehaviour, and comforted himself with good Wives Proverbs, *An untoward Child*, said he, *will make a brave Man; he will take up when he has sowed his wild Oats.* But alas, *he took up only Money, Blasphemies, Lewdness, and Irreligion*: And all those accursed Principles that stupify Conscience, and give Liberty to Appetite. I had the Fortune to meet this unhappy Gentleman. Gloominess methought sat on his Face, and Discontent appeared in every Motion. I suppose Conscience made some Efforts to rescue him, and that a kind Remonstrance might lecture him into his Duty. But no;

he was too far gone for a Cure. Vice had got the Ascendant, and twisted itself with his Nature. He seemed rather fond than ashamed of his Excesses, and almost grown proud of his Misbehaviour. The Cause of his Melancholy lay in his Pocket. He had *bassetted* away his Money, and his good Humour; and as his Debts swelled, his Credit sunk, and the Apprehensions of Bailiffs and Catch-poles dashed all his Sweets with Gall and Wormwood.

In fine, flesh'd in Debauchery, he was past Recovery: So that he run on in the broad Way, 'till a Stab stopp'd his Career, to begin a longer Course of Torments. Now had his Father been kinder, he might have lived a fine Gentleman, and died a pious Christian. But the old Man's Avarice discarded him of all the Sentiments of a Parent. To save a Penny, he expos'd his Son, and so ruined him eternally, to gratify a Caprice.

Well, said *Neander*, this Cruelty of the Father should stand upon Record as a perpetual *Caveat* to Parents, and the unfortunate End of the Son should scare young Gentlemen from a hair-brained Passion, debauched Company, and a Town-life. It is a Blessing to reap Instruction from another's Misfortune; but it is a severe Punishment to teach Posterity by our own. You have convinced me, dear *Eusebius*, of the Danger of a Town-life; and I will not run into the Arms of Temptation. We are not secure when we fly the Occasion, much less when we court them.

I applaud your Resolution, replied *Eusebius*, Temptations will certainly be too hard for good Counsel, and Incentives to Vice for Exhortation to Virtue. If you intend to fly Sin, retire from Danger. A pious Resolution is seldom Proof against a strong Invitation to Evil. *Neander* staid some Months with *Eusebius*; he had such a Respect for his Person, such a Veneration for his Virtue, that nothing was able to wean him from his Conversation, but a peremptory Command of his Father to return Home.

DIALOGUE II.

How Eusebius behaved himself in the Management of his Estate.

EUSEBIUS had been trained up in the Court and Camp; yet he espoused the Vices of neither: He remembered the Covenant he had made in the Font of Baptism with his Saviour; that there he renounced all Amity with the World, and promised to comply with all the Maxims of the Gospel. He endeavoured therefore to keep up to the Height of the Engagement, and postponed all temporal Pretensions to those of Eternity. A Sense of his Duty to his King and Country, fixed him in both these Stations, not a View of Interest or Glory. And he has been often heard to say, *That those who are Slaves to Money, command Conscience, and scorn to truckle to the vulgar Notions of Good and Evil.* So that an interested Man throws off Honesty, when he takes up the Desire of Wealth; and is as far from being a trusty Minister to his Prince, as a faithful Servant to his Master. In every Post he behaved himself with that Uprightness and Vigilance, nay, and Success also, that all confessed his Merits answered his Station; but he never courted any Recompence, besides the Satisfaction of having discharged his Duty. His Ambition was to deserve Preferment, not by *Places* to extort it; nor was he ever heard to murmur (when put by) that Favour over-topped Merit, or that Recommendations took Place of long Service. At the Revolution he withdrew from Business, and could never be persuaded to strike in with the new Government.

Having retreated from the Noise and Hurry of the Town, he began to consider the Instability of human Things, and concluded that worldly Happiness is precarious, and stands not only upon a Precipice, but upon Ice too, although it is a difficult Point to prevail with a great Man, and to depend on his Grandeur, or to persuade him his Station is slippery, or that the

Babel he has raised will sink into Dust, and bury him under the Ruins. If Princes fall, said he, where shall Subjects find sure footing? If we are unsafe, surrounded with Guards, what Security without them? If Friends turn treacherous, who dare we trust? If Relations betray us, where must we expect Fidelity? All this World can give, may be taken away; so that the most wealthy, the most dignified Man upon Earth has this only Advantage above the Peasant, that in a Moment he may tumble lower, and consequently be more miserable. For certainly he is less unhappy whom Fortune never favoured, than him she has forsaken. Why then do we unpeople Provinces to glut our Ambition, and raze Cities to build proud Palaces upon their Ruins? Why do we unbowel the Earth to feast our Avarice, and sweat under Ground to purchase Cares and Discontent above it? For who has most to lose, has always most to fear. The highest Station puts no Bounds to an ambitious Spirit, nor the vastest Treasures to a covetous one. When *Alexander* had even gotten all, he desired something more. His Wishes swelled with his Conquest, and his Pride marched farther than his Armies. His Treasures were immense, but his Prodigality was greater, and his Wants surpassed both. Money never makes a Man rich; the more he has, the more he covets. He is not poor that has enough, but he who possesses Millions, if he desires more.

Seeing therefore *Inconstancy*, *Cares*, *Dissatisfaction*, and either Emptiness or a Surfeit waits upon sublunary Enjoyments, why do we place our Happiness so low? And court Vexation of Spirit for our supreme Felicity? God has seated our true Enjoyments above the Smoak of this inferior World, and out of the Reach of Casualties. In vain therefore we weary ourselves in the Pursuit of real Satisfaction here, that is only to be found hereafter.

This Consideration so weaned *Eusebius* from the Love of the World, that he flung up all Pretensions to future Advancements, and resolved to lay out his Time upon the Purchase of a happy Eternity. He kept his Word,
for

for immediately he withdrew into the Country, and allied all the Qualities of a Gentleman, so handsomely with the Duties of a Christian, that it was hard to judge whether his Behaviour was more genteel, or more religious. He was wont to say, *Those lie under a Mistake, who fancy, Virtue is an Enemy to good Breeding, that a Man must turn off Civility to commence a Saint, and disband from the Society of Men, to keep a Correspondence with God.* No, no, continued he, *Christianity makes Men honest indeed, but not Clowns; it forbids Grimace, but not Sincerity; it puts a Mean between Foppishness and Rusticity, and forbids to shew no Breeding by affecting to shew too much. Virtue smooths the Brow as well as the Conscience, and knows to temper innocent Mirth with a seasonable Reservedness. So that we may keep up to the Height of our Duty to God, without dropping our Obligation to Neighbourhood and Society.*

Eusebius divided the Day between Devotion, Business, and innocent Diversions; or rather he devoted it entirely to God; because he raised to a supernatural End the most indifferent Actions, and never withdrew his Thoughts from his Creator, even in the Government of his Family, or Heat of his Recreations. So soon as he was up, he retired into his Closet, and passed an Hour either in Prayer, or the reading of good Books. And he took such a Pleasure in them, that he renounced all unprofitable and profane Lectures, in which so many Persons employ their Time to avoid Idleness, by an Idleness no less vain, and often more dangerous.

He could not endure the ridiculous Affectations of many Gentlemen, that is not only passed into a Custom, but almost into a Law, who suppose the least Insight into their Concerns forfeits their Patent, and throws them below the level of Quality; that it is a Mark of Peasantry to balance their Incomes with their Expences; or to take Notice whether their Revenues will keep touch with their Prodigality. One would think Gentlemen took Mr. *Dryden's* Satire in *Don Sebastian* for a Penegyric, who allows them *full Pockets, and empty Heads; great Estates in Land, and none in Wit.*

Eusebius thought it no more below the Station of a Gentleman, to take care of an Estate, than to possess one. He suspected not the Fidelity of his Steward, yet he thought it against the Laws of Prudence to trust him too far; for he knew Men are seldom careful of others Concerns, when they are negligent in their own: That it is a dangerous Experiment, to put even Honesty itself to the Trial. For alas, it is odds, that a Servant will cheat without Scruple, when he can without Discovery. He therefore every Week called his Steward to Account, viewed the Registers, and balanced his Receipts with his Expences. And thus he kept within Compass, and lived handsomely upon his own, not upon the Sweat of poor Shopkeepers and Labourers. For he looked on the taking upon Credit, as a Blur to a Gentleman's Reputation. And he used to say, *To run deep in a Merchant's Books, is an infallible Symptom of a sinking Estate, or a lost Conscience.* For who will run upon tick that has Money in Hand? Or, who intends to pay his Debts that has Credit to contract them, and no Fund to quit Scores?

He therefore modelled his Family to his Estate, not to his Quality, and his Equipage to his Purse, not to his Title. For neither Patent nor Coronets are a Protection to Injustice. And certainly he is guilty of this Crime, who contracts Debts he knows himself unable to conceal: Indeed it is a Gentleman's Practice, and so is the Breach of all God's Commands: But alas, Quality cannot sanctify an ill Action, nor unhallow a good one.

Eusebius could not endure to enter his Name in Merchant's Books; he would therefore rather defer a Purchase than take it upon Trust. He compared Debtors to the Man in the Gospel, possessed by a Legion of Devils; when one goes out, a hundred return to torment him. The thought of a Bailiff throws them into Fits; and the sight of a Creditor, like the Eye of a Basilisk, strikes them dead with Apprehension: So that they fear the Light, and like Owls and Bats range in Darkness and Obscurity; they confine themselves out of Fear of being confined, and commit themselves

selves close Prisoners to their Lodgings, not to be mew'd up in a Dungeon. In a word, they lead the Lives of Criminals, fear every Man, are scorn'd by all, and pitied by none ; and too often in spite of Caution, they take up in a Jail, and there die unregarded, like Rats behind the Hangings.

One Day a young Gentleman gave *Eusebius* a Visit: He was one of those who place all their Concerns in this World, without a Regard to the other. An extravagant Admirer of Life, and yet seem'd to be tired of it. He lived so fast, that he out-lived a Year in one Day ; and one would have thought his only Business was to post to his Grave. He had a handsome Estate, but too small for his Prodigality ; it answer'd the Dignity of a Knight, but his Expences kept Pace with those of a Duke ; so that in a few Years it run upon the Lees, and his Credit sunk with his Fortune. A Creditor found him out, and with Submission demanded of his Worship the Payment of a Debt ; but he had been so often haunted by such Spirits, that he had the knack of laying, as well as raising them. For he was lavishing of Promises, though sparing in the Performance, and always gave great Hopes, but never Money.

Well, says *Eusebius*, when he had dismiss'd the Man, may I inquire into the Fellow's Business. I suppose he forgot his Distance, and pass'd the Bounds of Civility ; for you seem'd in a ferment, and dismiss'd him with Warmth and Expostulation.

The Rascal, answer'd the Spark, duns me for a Debt of ten Years standing ; as if I enter'd his Books only Yesterday.

Nay, said *Eusebius*, with a Smile, that's insufferable. What ! To bait a Gentleman for an old Debt is unhandsome, and affronting too. For, what was Passion given us, but to let loose upon so provoking Occasions ? Those Rogues should be muzzled, and bound up to their good Behaviour : Besides, the Sum perchance is inconsiderable.

A Trifle, reply'd the Gentleman, not above a hundred Pounds, the Price of a Winter and Summer Suit.

My Mind gave me, said *Eusebius*, the Fellow was a Taylor; his Gate and Impudence proclaim'd his Profession. A Varlet without Breeding, without Conscience, or Good-nature, thus to way-lay a Gentleman; to break in upon his Retirement, to shirk into an Audience; nay, and come upon so unwelcome an Errand, argues small Respect for Quality, and less Behaviour. And then, where is the Rascal's Conscience to demand a Debt of ten Years standing? A Taylor's Right wears out with his Merchandize. And when a Gentleman throws off his Cloaths, he makes over the Obligation of Payment to his *Valet de Chambre*. A Taylor should no more think of asking a Debt, than a Gentleman of paying it. But dear, Sir, Raillery apart. Can Time prescribe against Justice? Must a Man forfeit his Right, because you sling up your Innocence? Or is it a less Impudence to refuse a just Payment than to solicit it? Believe me, Sir, he is not to blame who asks his Due, but he who compels him. And it's less becoming to live at free Quarter upon Merchants and Tradesmen, than to demand Satisfaction for the Grievance.

You remember, I presume, that once upon a Time, a *Daw* of great Family, but small Revenue, had a Month's Mind to be fine. He was low in Cash, but flush of Credit; and so took up on Tick a gaudy Equipage. He lorded it among his Neighbours; and forgetting his Pedigree, pretended Alliance to the Bird of Paradise. But in the Height of his Prosperity his Creditors attack'd him; and being unable to return either Money or Security, they strip'd him of his Bravery, and turn'd him into the Woods, *in puris naturalibus*. And then all those Sycophants, that fawn'd upon his Fortune, laugh'd at his Folly, and turn'd Sir *John Daw* into plain *Jack*; nay, and threw him among the *Rooks* for his Punishment.

There needs no Key to the Fable. The Application sits on the Surface. Nay, our Sparks have been at the Charge of turning it into real Story, and so are sad Instances both of the Bird's Pride on the one side, and Folly on the other, and tho' they barter
not

not their Quality, they are strip'd of its Support; and then they knock off, naked of Ornament, and consequently of Regard. For Nobility, without Cash, makes but a lean Figure; one Ounce of Gold weighs forty Coats of Arms. Tho' the Blood of a Hero rowls in your Veins, if Chink has forsaken your Pocket, you must shear off to *Rooks* for a Maintenance; Regard rises and falls by the secret Influence of Metal.

Pray, Sir, a Paraphrase if you please, reply'd the Gentleman, on the Parable; for I confess, I am unable to see through it, unless you intend by a sly *Innuendo* to condemn me to the Trade of Purse-taking on the King's Highway. Under Favour, said *Eusebius*, it's not my Province to set any Man his Task; but I am a kind of Figure-flinger, and pretend to tell young Mens Fortunes, not indeed by the help of the black Art, but by their own Conduct. You take upon Trust with both Hands, and pay with neither; you wade up to the Chin in Taylor's Books; you sink over Head and Ears in Vintners; card away 500*l.* in a Night, and sling into a Miss's Lap 1000*l.* maintain one Family in the Country, another in the Town. You receive 2000*l.* per Annum, and disburse Five. Now where must this Prodigality end, but in Poverty, Contempt, and Despair? And when a Gentleman is waited on by three such Attendants, he is equip'd for any Practice. Necessity is a bad Counsellor, and Despair a worse; and I can assure you, they have set some Gentlemen upon unwarrantable Enterprizes: For when they have no Fund to live on; they must live by their Wits, and then they are forc'd to cast up their Accounts at *Old-Bailey's*, and to pay the Reckoning at *Hyde-Park-Corner*.

Young Gentlemen must live up to their Birth, said the Gentleman.

Provided, answered *Eusebius*, their Purse runs even with their Quality. For otherwise Title must stoop to Revenues, and Figure must shrink to Necessity. It's ill Husbandry to glitter in Equipage, like a Prince, for a Twelve-month, and then to sneak into a Corner with a solitary Lacquey, down at Heels, and out at El-

bows; to turn off from a Guinea Ordinary to the Basket, or to stand oblig'd for a Meal, to the Courtesy of Relations all your Life after. But this is not our Case neither. Few Gentlemen break their Estates by stretching them to their Birth, but beyond it. A Squire will vie Prodigality with a Lord, and a Knight with a Duke. Now, alas! how can two thousand *per Annum* hold out with ten? It must jade and founder in a short time, and lay its Master like a tired *Tit* in the Mire.

But suppose these Misfortunes wait not upon you, where is Conscience?

Nay, reply'd the Gentleman, in good Hands I assure you. For certainly, Conscience may be well, though my Estate be sick. I may balance Accounts with God, though I am behind Hand with my Neighbour.

Not so easily neither, said *Eusebius*. For when a Gentleman takes upon Credit, Conscience enters Bond for the Payment; and if the Estate cannot answer the Incumbrance, that will be uneasy. Pray, Sir, continued *Eusebius*, is there no such Law as *Thou shalt not steal*?

Without doubt, answer'd *N. N.*

And does this Precept take in, said *Eusebius*, only Pads and Cut-purses?

It forbids, said *N. N.* all Acts of Injustice; nay, and restrains Desires. It's ill even to covet an ill Thing; and he who designs to over-reach his Neighbour, transgresses the Law, as well as he who deceives him.

Your Casuistry, reply'd *Eusebius*, is sound and orthodox, but not your Practice. For do you not force poor Creatures to change their Labour into a continual Attendance; to saunter away their Time in an Anti-Chamber, and then to return home with empty Promises? Nay, and it's often taken for a Civility not to be affronted; and for Payment in part, not to be deny'd (with a *G— damn ye*) for the whole. Now when a Creditor must be eternally upon the Trot to come up to his Debtor, and ply at all the Coffee-houses for Intelligence

ligence of his Haunts, the Irons cool at Home, Trade sinks, Work is at a stand, and a Bankrupt treads upon his Heels. For how shall a Merchant pay his Debts, who recives none? Now, Sir, here is *lucrum cessans* on the one Hand, and *damnum emergens* on the other, and in the Sight of God you stand responsible for both: They will be put to your Accounts, and you must either repair them here, or suffer for them hereafter.

For God's sake, Sir, said *N. N.* who bids those Rascals run upon the Hunt, and trace my Motions; nay, and break my Head with importunate Sollicitations? Must I answer for their Folly, and pay for their Extravagance? Let them keep within Doors, and carry on their Trade, I will not intermeddle in their Concerns.

That is, Sir, reply'd *Eusebius*, if they will sit down with their Loss, you are satisfy'd; if they will take your Honour for their Security, and cross Scores for Promises, or be content with a Lacquey with a Cudgel for Paymaster, I easily believe you. If all the Creditors in the Nation will vouchsafe to burn their Registers, Spendthrifts will be at the Expence of the Execution, and applaud their Generosity. And if they please to give in good Security never to importune you with unpleasant Visits, you will secure them of Non-payment.

I fancy you are got into a Vein of Drollery. But the Mischief is, with some People a Jest improves into an Argument, and Raillery grows up into Reason. But deceive not yourself; those who put off Payment with dilatory Pretences, not only bid their Creditors neglect their Trade and Family, but force them: For without Importunity nothing is done. They must beg for their Due, as hard as for an Alms; and spend more Time in recovering their Money, than in earning it. It's as easy to dig the Oar out of the Mines of *Potosi*, as to importune a Debt out of the Pocket of a Prodigal.

But if a poor Tradesman by such an Injustice chance to go down in the World, to suffer a Seizure of his Goods, or his Person, you must account for the Da-

mages

images also. For you are the Cause of his Misfortune, and by consequence must answer for it.

To be plain, said *N. N.* my Estate lies Sick of a Consumption, the Dice have prey'd upon its Vitals; and Riot has brought it so low, that I fear it's now past Recovery. I cannot cancel past Scores without throwing myself into a Necessity of drawing in my Retinue, or living upon Courtesy. Now either Way exposes my Reputation to the public Obloquy, and my Person rather to Raillery than Compassion. For Misfortune in our Age is a Jest of itself, and a little Fooling upon the Subject makes bad Circumstances insupportable. When a Coat is Thread-bare, how easy is it to pick a Hole? When a Man can scarce keep his Head above Water, a small Weight plunges him to the bottom. Though he may struggle against one *Commitimus*, a Leash will certainly sink him in a Dungeon; and these Furies seldom appear single. I confess my Inclination leans not towards the *King's-Bench* or the *Marshealsea*. I am for a free Air, and hate to lie at the Mercy of a Turnkey.

It's more easy, answer'd *Eusebius*, to commit, than to excuse an Injustice. Estate Diseases, like those of the Body, must be cured by a slender Diet. Riot and Highfare enforce the Fever, enflame the Blood, and breed ill Humours. And I have known some Estates brought back from the last Agony to a perfect State of Health and Vigour, by a short Pittance of Barley-Broth. I persuade you to make a Trial of the *Recipe*, enter into a Course of Physick. But then, as you hope for Benefit, come not within the Smoak of the Town; the Remedy requires the fresh Air of the Campaign, Retirement and Solitude. To speak plain, retrench Expences, dismiss Equipages, reform Attendants, reserve one fourth Part of your Revenues for Subsistence, and three for Creditors. Five hundred *per Annum* well managed, will go farther than two thousand ill. And altho' the Sum answers not the Extravagancies of a Town Debauchee, it will keep touch with the Occasion of a sober Gentleman. For I can assure you, Birth is not so expensive as Prodigality;
Gravity

Gravity of Behaviour and Moderation set it off, and give it a finer Lustre than all the costly Trappings of Pomp, Equipage, and Riot.

But People will laugh, if you shrink your Figure, pack up for the Country, and stint Expences? Suppose they do; to stifle their Mirth, will you pawn an Estate? And play the Fool to buy off their Fooling? Will you rather stand their Scorn than their Meriment? And be despised in Poverty, than rally'd in a comfortable Fortune? Retrieve your Estate, and Credit will rise in Proportion; he never wants Regard, who is stock'd with Money; nor he Contempt, who is unfurnish'd.

Sparing and Parsimony lead not to *Newgate*, or the *King's-Bench*; but Prodigality, Gaming, Wine, and Misses: Creditors will bear more Years with Men, who take sure Measures to pay their Debts, than Days with those who increase them.

But methinks Conscience and Duty should take place of all temporal Views. A Christian that believes there is a Hell to punish Injustice, should not make himself miserable beyond Redemption, upon a groundless Forfeiture of Reputation. For on my Word, dear Sir, Credit in the next World is no Protection; when once Injustice has plunged you into Flames, the Reputation of *Alexander* will not bail you.

Now, as I said before, it's a heavy Injustice to pay Merchants only with empty Promises, and yet more heavy to return for Ware, Curses, and Imprecations. For to be free with you, Sir, Gentlemen that discharge their Debts with such adulterate Coin, enhance the Reckoning, and commence Thieves and Robbers. Indeed they play not at small Game upon the King's Highway, nor take a Purse with a Pistol in their Hand, and a *Damn you deliver* in their Mouths. They have more Concern for their Skin, than to embark in an Enterprize that leads to a Halter. But, however, tho' they endanger not their Necks, they stab their Conscience; and if they stand clear of the Infamy of Padding, they avoid not the Guilt. For to refuse Payment is no less

an Injustice before God, than to plunder on the Highway.

God forbid I should refuse Payment, said *N. N.* But alas, I am in no Condition. My Debts run high, and my Estate low ; Taxes sweep away one part, my Family another ; and when present Expences exceeds Receipts, how shall I cross out the past.

Under favour, said *Eusebius*, you refuse by your Conduct, though not by your Words, and that is more significant, not less criminal. You rattle in a Coach and Six ; glitter in Embroidery ; hector in Taverns, and sleep upon the Dice. You take up at Interest, and yet pay none. Is not this the straight Way to beggar yourself first, and then all you deal with ? For is not such a Mismanagement the High-road to Beggary ; and consequently does it not lead you into an Impossibility of paying ? If you refuse not Payment, apply due Means, lessen Charges, and stint Prodigality to meer Necessaries : This is your Interest as well as Duty. And it no less concerns your Estate than your Soul. For in a Word, I must repeat it, without Reparation of Damages, there is no Salvation. Who wilfully leaves this World in Debt, must pay it in the other ; and tho' he eludes the Prosecution of Creditors here, he cannot avoid the Justice of the Almighty hereafter.

The Gentleman heard good Counsel, and was within an Ace of following it. He saw his Estate lie at Stake, together with his Soul, and that he posted on to Beggary and Damnation. He confess'd *Eusebius's* Advice was the most secure, tho' the less palatable ; and good Husbandry might retrieve his sinking Fortune, and furnish Supplies for Use and Payment. But on a sudden, forsooth, he would turn Politician, and play'd the Fool out of a Principle of Wisdom. The Matter calls, said he, for Deliberation and Thought ; Repentance treads on the Heels of quick Resolutions ; pray give me leave to pause before I leap from one Extream to the other.

He took Leave of *Eusebius*, and posted to Town, and with the same Speed to his Ruin. For here Prodigality

digality began his Misfortune, and ill Counsel completed it. He subpoena'd a *Juncto* of desperate Debauchees to his Lodgings ; he open'd the State of his Lodgings ; he open'd the State of his Concerns, and the Advice of *Eusebius*. But he might as well have flown for Sanctuary into a Den of *Assassins*, or secur'd his Purse in the Hands of a Highwayman, or learn'd the Way to Paradise from the Devil himself, as expect wholesome Advice from those who follow the worst, and place Interest before Conscience. These *Harpies* had given a helping Hand to the Gentleman's Misfortune, and thrust him blindfold upon the Brink of the Precipice. They gain'd by his Losses, and drain'd his Purse at Play to fill their own : So that to counsel Parsimony, was to plead against themselves, and damp up the Channel that supplied their Debaucheries with Nourishment.

What Wonder therefore their Advice was as contrary to *Eusebius's*, as their Designs ? Desperate Remedies, say they, are only to be apply'd in desperate Diseases. Who will lop off an Arm or a Leg for a Pimple ? Or drink *Antimony* for a *Tertian* ? When there is no Cure, something may be ventur'd ; but when there is no Danger, take not a Bowl of *Ratbane* for a Preservative. Your Estate, Sir, is encumber'd, but not spent ; it runs low, but I suppose Merchants Registers are not like enchanted Circles, when once you are in, there is no stepping out. One lucky Chance at Dice will rescue all, and make Scores even. Fortune has indeed frown'd upon you, she will begin to smile. She is a Female, fond of Change, unaccustom'd to Constancy ; and when we has thrown off her Spleen and Ill-nature, she over-sets a Man with Kindness and Courtship. *T. W.* was brought to a solitary Guinea ; but then good Luck veer'd about into the right Corner, and this single Piece fetch'd back twenty Thousand ; so that he had never soar'd so high, had he not fell so low, nor escap'd his Ruin, had he not come so near it.

This Remedy was indeed more dangerous than the Disease, and as mortal to Estate-distempers, as Poison

to

to those of the Body. However, they stole upon his blind Side ; so that he surrender'd not only without Resistance, but even with Pleasure and Transport. Gaming was his predominant Passion, and this easily reconcil'd his Palate to the Prescription ; nay, and turn'd the Medicine into a Regale. You have nick'd, said he, the Point. He that cures disjointed Estates by Recreation, and conveys Health thro' Pleasure, is a Surgeon in good earnest. He falls then to Gaming ; but, alas, cogg'd Dice were too hard for good Luck ; and Fortune, that turn'd tail before, now quite deserted him. His Bags droop'd, and his Credit hung the Wings ; his Money was flown, and though his Lands chang'd not their Place, they went over to other Landlords. All his Companions, like Rats in a Storm, abandon'd the sinking Vessel, and he found himself in a Jail, before he dream'd of a Bailiff. Here this unfortunate Gentleman sees his past Errors, but no way to correct 'em. Lost Grace may be recover'd by Tears, but not Estates. We may weep ourselves into Heaven, not into a Fortune, nor out of Confinement. He measures a great Length, that vaults from abundance into Poverty. The Fall dashes in pieces not only the Prospect, but the very Hope of a Return. Nothing remains but the Sense of the present Calamity, and the Remembrance of a past Felicity. So that, like the Damn'd, they are tormented with the Pain of Loss, as well as with that of Sense ; and the Ghost of their darling Pleasures, revive merely to perform the Office of Executioners. but did these poor Gentlemen understand this obvious Piece of Chymistry, to transmute Necessity into Virtue, to bear with Religation to Providence, the Misfortune, Folly and Sin have drawn upon them, I would pronounce them happy in their Misfortune ; but, alas, they rather rage than repent, deplore their Restraint without dropping one Tear for their Debauches, the Cause of it, and so in the End they step from one Dungeon to a worse, from a temporal Confinement, to an eternal one. This is the End of those who receive Favours without Thanksgiving, and Punishment without Humiliation ; that neither
praise

praise God for his Mercies, nor pray to him under his Judgments.

How Eusebius behaved himself to his Domesticks.

Tho' *Eusebius* retired from the Town, he intended not to turn *Hermit*, not to disband from Society and Conversation. He was no public Enemy, like *Timon* to his Species, nor a Friend to Sourness and Ill-nature. He knew the Life of a Christian might stand with that of a Gentleman; that he might comply with all the Duties of Deligion, without stepping below his Station. He therefore kept up an Equipage, rather genteel than great; it answer'd his Quality, and was proportion'd to his Revenues. So that he neither incumber'd his Estate with unseasonable Expences, nor better'd it by a sordid Parsimony. He was content with his present Fortune, and neither desired to be greater, nor fear'd much to be less. For indeed he was too low for Envy, and yet too high for Contempt.

I.

He rather behav'd himself to his menial Servants like a Father than a Master; and always treated 'em as freeborn Subjects, not Slaves. He could not endure the Conduct of those Gentlemen, who shew less Concern for a poor Domestic, than a Beast of Burthen, and let him live a Brute without Religion or Instruction, so he carries on their Business, and works himself down to support their Riot. He was sensible the Difference even between a Prince and a Peasant lies in Fortune, not in Nature; that their Pretensions in the next World are equal; and that even in this, a Slave in the Sight of God that practises Virtue, is more noble than an Emperor over-grown with Sin. He thought therefore himself obliged in Duty and Conscience to take care of their Souls, as well as of their Bodies; to allow Instructions as well as Food, and to accompany their Wages with an Addition of good Counsel.

II.

II.

For this Purpose he entertain'd a Chaplain, whose Business was only to instruct the Family, to instil the Principles of Christianity into the Hearts of his Domestic; to train them up in Virtue, withdraw them from Vice, and to bring them into Acquaintance with their Duty; which is seldom known, and more seldom practised, by this servile Rank of Men. *What Religion are you of?* said a Lady of my Acquaintance to her Maid. *Religion, forsooth,* answer'd the poor Creature, *is for Gentlefolks.* She supposed Drudgery was the End of her Creation; that Expectation of future Happiness lay out of her way. And thus she lived in *Christianity* like a *Barbarian* in the Wilds of *America*, without Hope of a future Reward, or Fear of Punishment. Hence Gentlemens Families serve too often for Nurseries to *Newgate* and the *Stews*. For their Dependants being brought up in Idleness on the one Hand, and Licentiousness on the other, when dismissed they know not where to retire: And so the Maids live Prostitutes, and the Men die Thieves and Robbers. Whereas did they train up their Domestic in Christian Principles, and inure them to the Practice, they would prove more useful even to the Management of their temporal Concerns, and less burdensome to the State.

For certainly a Man that has no Principle of Religion, has less of Morality. Few People are just, that have no Reason to be so, and many Invitations to Treachery and Deceit. With what Security therefore can a Master employ those in Business, who only change the Discovery of a Theft with the Sin, and vary the Fact, like the *Lacedemonians*, into a Virtue? Alas, Infidelity will baffle Caution, and over-reaching will beat out more Plots than an *Argus* can discover. Who has a Conscience needs no Spies, and who has none will outwit a hundred.

III.

Eusebius would never admit a Debauchee into his Service. He thought no Man would be faithful to his Master

Master, who was a Traitor to his God; much less careful of another's Concerns, who was forgetful of his own. Besides, Vice is diffusive, and spreads by Commerce like the Plague. One wicked Person throws the Contagion among a thousand, and it's odds some will take it up; and when once it gains upon a Family, it seldom stops, till the Infection becomes epidemical, and the Distemper incurable. So that he always examined more narrowly a Servant's Behaviour than his Abilities; and often-times a good Life atoned for Unexperience. Clumsiness, said he, may be polish'd by civil Conversation, and Skill may be improved by Practice, but vicious Habits seldom wear off: They are too stubborn for Instruction, and Proof to Homily and good Counsel.

IV.

When he was forced to reprehend, he avoided Heat, and never flew out into Strains of Indecency. He knew that Anger was ungovernable and clamorous, and as unfit to give as to take Advice. It drowns Reason by Noise and Tumult, and seldom pronounces a just Sentence, but when it intends an unjust one: It throws a Man off his Guard, and even below his Dignity, and betrays those Weaknesses we should blush to own upon the Torture. Hence he used to say, that a cholerick Correction was seldom well taken; that it rather irritated, than healed, and struck out Resentment, not Sorrow. Wherefore his Words were as mild as his Countenance; and the Sedateness of his Gesture answered the Sweetness of his Language. Nothing opprobrious passed his Lips, nothing tempestuous, nothing unbecoming the Mouth of a Gentleman, or the Ears of a Christian. In fine, his Reprimands tasted always stronger of Honey than of Gall; and they were received by some with Repentance, by all with Patience, and by none with Indignation.

Some Gentlemen of his Acquaintance took the Liberty to tell him, that his Mildness would soon meet with Contempt, and his Affability with Scorn; that these under-rate Mortals are as incapable to be moved
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by Kindness, as to practise it; that a Cane mends more Faults in a Quarter, than dogmatizing in a Twelve-month; and that nothing affects their Will, but what lies heavy upon their Sense. But those Sparks talk just as they acted, and only disapproved *Eusebius's* Method by commending their own. However, an unlucky Accident admonish'd one of these Censors of his Mistake, and convinced him *ad hominem*, that Roughness is not always in Season, and that Blows rather provoke than awe an Inferior, and sooner stir up Disobedience than Respect.

By chance poor *Dick*, reaching the Oil to his Master, liquor'd his Wig, and the Oversight spread to the Borders of a new Suit *a-la-mode*. The poor Fellow suffer'd the Rack in the very Accident, and expired the Guilt of the Offence in the very Commission: But the 'Squire, who was extremely smitten with Drapery, and rated the Ornaments of his Back above all the Embellishments of his Brain, broke out into all the Indecencies of Language and Gesture. He first damn'd poor *Dick* to the Pit of Hell; then Son-of-a-whor'd him to all Intents and Purposes; and, in fine, bedaub'd him with all the unbeseeming Tropes of *Billingsgate* and the *Bear-garden*. The very Knowledge of such mean stuff misbeseems a Gentleman; but the speaking it degrades him, recalls his Patent, and breaks his Escutcheon. *Dick* begged his Pardon, but Rage got the Ascendant over *Monsieur's* Reason, and Fury would not hearken to any Articles of Accommodation. The Spark flew from the Table, the Oil had fired the Brain, and pursued *Dick* with a Cane in his Hand, and Oaths in his Mouth: The poor Wretch would have compounded for a Limb; but when he saw no way open for a Retreat, he faced about: The Cane had beat out all Respect, and Self-preservation took place of Duty and Obedience. He return'd with Usury the Blows he had received. In fine, the Man master'd the Master; and plain *Dick* over-top'd *Right Worshipful*. The Company slept in between; some stared, others railed, and all laugh'd at the Comedy. After Dinner, *Euse-*
bius

bis took the Gentleman aside, and minded him of his Extravagance.

I suppose, Sir, said he, you have dropt your former Opinion, that an high Hand, and an imperious Brow keep Servants to their Duty; the best way to persuade them to obey with Respect, is to command with Moderation. Judge first of Faults before you punish them, and never swell a Fly into an Elephant. You must wink at some Offences, laugh at others, and chastise all with Calmness and Charity: Put a Difference between a Chance and a deliberate Action. Treat not an innocent Oversight, and a malicious Treason with the same Severity: Proportion the Pain to the Fault; and so when the Offence is trivial, take care the Punishment be not exorbitant. When a Servant deserves a Cane, it's time to dismiss him; and it's more honourable to turn him off, than to stoop to the Function of a *Town Beadle*. In a Word, Sir, remember, that to engage with an Equal is dangerous, with a Superior foolish, and with an Inferior contemptible.

V.

Eusebius's Conduct won all his Domesticks, and not only their Hands, but also their Hearts lay at his Devotion: They carried on his Interest with as much Eagerness as if they promoted their own: They respected him as a Master, and loved him as an indulgent Father. And the Fear of displeasing him kept them more within the Compass of their Duty, than the Apprehension of Punishment; and they rather desired to feel his Anger, than to deserve it.

VI.

Swearing and Blaspheming are comprehensive Vices, and if Custom had the Secret of Transmutation, like Chymists, they would challenge a Place among the Virtues. Christians, who are forbid to swear by any thing, assume Liberty of swearing by all things: One would think the Breach of the Precept was the only Design they aimed at; and Disobedience to God's Commands their own Diverſion. Gentlemen, without doubt, first brought

brought this hellish Dialect into Fashion; and Servants, who are their Betters, have improved it.

Great Gentlemens Families have laid down the Language of their Country, to take up that of the Damn'd; and it's hard to determine whether those Masters, who permit such hideous Expressions, are more guilty than those who speak them.

Eusebius could not endure this execrable Jargon. It soured his Blood, and made his Hearing a Burden. A thousand good Qualities in a Servant made no Atonement in his Opinion for this only bad one; and though he pitied those Failures that savour'd of Weakness, he never gave quarter to blaspheming: *Other Vices*, said he, *make bold with God's Commands, this outrages his very Person; it adds Insult to Disobedience, and Contempt to Abuse: It's a Symptom of no Religion. For who will revile the very Being he adores? Or rally and worship the same Object? And then what Respect can a Master expect from him that turns upon his Creator, and flies in the Face of the Omnipotent?* In fine, continued he, they are Nuisances to human Nature, and deserve rather to be prosecuted as public Enemies to our Species, than to be entertained as Domestic. He endeavoured to reclaim them by Reproof and Exhortation; but when he saw no Amendment, he dismissed them without Delay. No Intercession of Friends, or Prospect of Interest, could persuade him to harbour these declared Enemies of the Almighty. They affront the Virtuous, debauch the Unwary, and are both a Scandal and Grievance to the Family they live in. Rebels to God should be barred of Protection, no less than Traitors to their Prince. To receive the Guilty, is to countenance their Crime, as really in one Case as in the other.

Had Gentlemen a due Regard for the Honour of God, *id. est*, were they Christians in good earnest, these wretched Liberties of their Servants would stop their Blood, and make them sweat with a Disgust and Horror; they would discard those puny Giants who dare defy the Omnipotent, and invoke his Name to burlesque his Justice; they would clear their Families of all these Rakes that infect the Air they breathe, and the

the Earth they walk on : That by a strange Metamorphose, turn the Dwellings of Men into the Habitation of Devils, and the Torments of the Damn'd into the Diversion of the Living : For I can assure you, Gentlemens Houses are too often a lively Picture of Hell ; there you will see all the Lewdness of Hell, and hear all the Language of that cursed Region, with only this Difference, that those unhappy Creatures below blaspheme God, of whom they hope no Mercy, and these above lampoon him, of whom they expect Pardon. Nay, here are Devils also ; not indeed by Nature, but Practice, and almost every thing beside Brimstone and Despair. Would Gentlemen reform this unbecoming Dialect, Servants would cast it off ; but when it is spoke in the Parlour, it's taken up in the Kitchen ; it walks into the Stables, and steals into all the servile Offices of the House. For Servants wear their Master's Vices, as well as their Livery, and copy their Actions, to purchase their Favour : In that, Cursing, Swearing, and indeed all Vice is degrading ; but when it gets into great Houses, when Nobility abets it, and Quality gives it Countenance and Entertainment, it changes Complexion, and becomes modish and creditable. And this is the Reason Imprecations and Oaths are so far frequent among us ; for an innocent Oversight we send a Servant to the Devil, and call down upon him all the Diseases, all the Plagues of this World, and the next. Oaths are used by all Persons, and to complete the Impiety on all Occasions, we court and quarrel in this Language : We express our Kindness and Aversion, our Joy and our Grief in the same Terms. Success is waited on by Oaths, as well as Disappointments ; and they set off Temper as well as Passion. In fine, they run through all our Discourse ; they stand up in the Room of Sense ; and one would think we were furnish'd with no other Rhetoric or Reason. His Care wrought good Effects in the Family, and his Example better ; Swearing was an unknown Language, as well as Ribaldry ; and all those Vices which hover about great Mens Palaces found no Entertainment,

ment, no Admittance in his. When there arose any Contest between his Domesticks, he took Cognizance of it himself, and compos'd all Differences with the Equity of a Judge, and the Charity of a Father. No body refused to stand to his Arbitration, because they were sure Partiality would have no Hand in the Judgment; but that unbiass'd either by Aversion or Kindness, he examin'd the Cause without taking Notice of the Persons. And indeed his Conduct spread such a Reputation abroad of his Equity and Wisdom, that his Neighbours put their Concerns in his Hands, and rather appeal'd to his Arbitration, than to the Law, that enriches indeed the Lawyer, but beggars the Plaintiff, who often gains the Suit, but loses his Estate.

This Piece of Charity rais'd an unexpected Enemy, who attack'd *Eusebius* with Might and Main. The Story deserves a Relation. It will delight and instruct, and so convey Profit through Pleasure.

PHILARGYRUS's Character.

Philargyrus (for so I must christen the Gentleman) was born to a low Fortune, [*Rascal* in *Yorkshire* was the Place of his Birth,] and the Denomination jump'd with his Person. He only inherit'd the common Benefits of Mankind; the Earth to walk on, the Air to breathe, and all the Rivers of the World to drink: Being leanly provided by Nature, he resolv'd to set up for himself; and though he want'd Materials, he was not ill furnish'd of Resolution: He had no mind to wander upon the Common: Poverty seem'd to him unfashionable, Dependence hung easy, and he thought Courtesy an uncertain Revenue. He had receiv'd of Nature a lively Wit, and of Education a weak Conscience; he improv'd that by Study, and wore out this by Practice; so that at last he turn'd it out of Service, or left it for a Pawn with a Broker: For Conscience and Lawyers are not to be reconcil'd; they can scarce be brought to lodge under the same Roof, but never to lie in the same Bed. Money was his Passion; and if he could
secure

secure the End, he never bogled at the Means. He charged through all the Niceties of Morality, and scorn'd to stop at hard Names invented by Schoolmen, and fear'd by Fools. Honour, said he, and Conscience are pretty Things enough; they jingle upon the Ear, but not in the Pocket; they are orthodox in Speculation, but heretical in Life and Commerce. A Man that intends to thrive must not steer by foreign Opinion, nor startle at a Set of formal Notions, that cramp Merit, pall the Spirits, and confine Activity to a small Compass: These Principles took off Restraint, made room for vigorous Efforts, removed the Difficulties of Business, and pointed out a short Cut to Expedition and Success: For a Man that has discharged Conscience, laid open the Inclosures of Good and Evil, thrown off the Incumbrances of Right and Wrong, and melted down Just and Unjust into the same Mass; that regards Generosity as Farce and Ceremony, Piety as childish Softness, and Honesty as a Check to Industry; that haggles away his Credit for Six-pence, and his Soul for a Shilling, has Line enough to sport his Net in, and Elbow-room more than enough for Invention.

We must not therefore wonder a Man thus equipp'd for Advancement meets with Success; for Fortune and no Conscience are generally on the same Side; and though sometimes she dotes on young Men, she often flings her Favours upon Reprobates. He was by Constitution one fourth of a Rascal, *i. e.* *Scrivener* and *Solicitor*; and, to be Cheat all over, he commenced *Attorney*. So that this one Man possess'd all the ill Qualities of the Species, without the Allay of a good one; he was a *Scrivener* on the one Side, *Solicitor* on the other, and Monster in every Limb.

He had glean'd up all the little Artifices of his Profession, and augmented the Number by a fresh Supply of his own Invention; for he was sensible Time and Use wear out Intrigues, as well as Cloaths; and that the Gentlemen of the Robe must recruit their Forces no less than those of the Sword; that a Legerdemain once discovered, like a maimed Soldier, is unfit for Service. In a Word, his Inclinations were ungenerous,

his Practice unwarrantable; he lay below the Passion of Love, and flew above that of Compassion; he broke through all the Barriers of Blood, through all the Regards of Honour, and Principles of Humanity. And indeed, what Virtue can take hold of a Rake, when Interest comes in Competition?

There are Lawyers of Fortune as well as Soldiers; and as these will fight on any Side for Pay, those will plead on any for a Fee, and often on both. *Philargyrus* was of this Temper; he examin'd his Client's Purse, before he enter'd into the Merits of the Cause, and always pronounced the Suit just, if the Man was wealthy; but where there was no *Money*, there was never any *Title*; *Gold* and *Right* went Hand in Hand, and *Wrong* perpetually waited upon Poverty. He played first his Tricks of *Legerdemain* in Town; he wheedled People into his Snares, and decoyed them into their Ruin. But Time laid open the Imposture, and unmask'd his Artifice; so that at length, like frighted Birds, the Citizens grew wild; they took wing at his very Shadow, and he could never come within Shot. And what Wonder that Reason should teach Caution, as well as Instinct; and ill Usage clap Men on their Guard, as well as Beasts.

He changes therefore his Camp, and wheels off into the Country to forage the Peasant, as he had gulled the Merchant; he is armed *cap-a-pee* with *Codes* and *Pandects*, *Statutes* and *Reports*. But in a *Tun* of Law, there was not one *Grain* of Justice; he left this in Town, together with his Ears to save Expences, to insinuate, that People should not wonder if he was deaf to the Complaints of Widows, and Orphans, seeing had lost the Faculty of Hearing.

He found the good People in a neighbourly Correspondence employed in Tillage; they had no Leisure to think of Feuds, nor Mind to start Quarrels; they carried on their own Business, without entering into the Concerns of others, and enjoyed their own, without the troublesome Thoughts of Fear or Envy. No sooner was he settled among them, but the Scene changed. These *Boors* began to talk of *Law* and *Encroachments*;

croachments; of Forfeitures and Seizures; so that the Disease that raged in Hudibras's Days seized upon the Clowns of Middlesex and Surry.

*When civil Dudgeon first grew high
And Men fell out, they knew not why:
When hard Words, Jealousies, and Fears,
Set Folks together by the Ears.*

The Furies seemed to have left Hell to haunt the World, and forsaken the Damned to plague the Living. They transplanted the Gibberish of *Westminster-hall* into the Country. Tom and Dick laid down the *How goes the Market*, to talk of *Statutes*, *Precedents*, *Reports*, *Writs of Error*, *Reverse of Judgment*, &c. One would have thought the Jargon of the Bar had outlawed the Tongue of the Country; and some, that the French King shipped for England his Norman Language, to open a Passage for his Arms. There was Action upon Action: The Son sued the Father for Allowance: The Wife set upon the Husband for a separate Maintenance: One mortgaged his Tenement to recover Damages; another pleaded away 100l. *per Annum*, to chop at five; and in the End People bought Law, and *Philargyrus* swept away all their Money; so that he out-ran the very Lawyer in the Fable; for this only supped the Oyster, but our Attorney pocketed the very Shell into the Bargain: He slipped into their Livings, when he had privateered upon their Purse. For even those who gained their Suit, lost their Capital, to quit his Bill of Charges.

It is strange a Christian could intend such Mischief, and yet more, that one Pettifogger could act it. But the Truth is, the Lawyer was too hard for the Christian; the Profession got the better of Religion. Besides, though his Forehead was double gilt with Brass, his Tongue was steeped in Oil; he was Master of his Words, and what is more, of his Conscience; a Flatterer in *Folio*, and no Man better skilled in the Art of moving the Passions; he could transmute Phlegm into Choler; and then, by a turn of the Tongue, harangue down the

Hurricane into a Calm; he had a hundred Precedents at a dead-list, and could throw over a bad Cause, all the Varnish of a good one: In a Word, he was an errand Lawyer, (*id est*) all Paint all Plaister; Honest without, and Knave within.

Your Cause is good, said he to *William*, *give me my Fee, and I'll defend it*. Now the poor Fellow had no more Right than to the Empire of *China*. At the Trial a Verdict passes against him. *Where are we now, Mr. Attorney*, cries *William*? *My Fee*, answers *Philargyrus*, *I'll move the Court in arrest of Judgment*. But Sentence is confirmed, and *Will's* Hopes sink with his Purse. *We are lost*, says the poor Man. *Not yet*, answers *Mr. Attorney*, *my Fee, and I'll bring a Writ of Error*. But here again Judgment is confirmed, and *Will* is condemn'd to Costs and Charges. *What now, good Sir!* says *William*, with a doleful Accent. *There is no more to be said*, replies *Master Attorney*, with a Shrug, *pay the Knave his Money, and I am satisfied*.

*So Lawyers, lest the Bear Defendant,
And Plaintiff Dog should make an end on't;
Do slave and toil with Writs of Error,
Reverse of Judgments, and Demurrer,
To let them breathe a while, and then
Hoop, and so sets them on again.*

The Defendant went away with one Part of *Will's* Livelihood, the Attorney with the other; so that the Law stript him to the Skin, and turn'd him on the Parish without Support, and what is worse, without Pity. The poor Man complain'd he was beggar'd by the Law; but he misplaced his Misfortune, and laid it at the wrong Door. For as a Mass of peccant Humours makes indeed a Man sick, and the Physician kills him; so Avarice and Contention embroil an Estate, but the Lawyers ruin it; and as no Man dies of a Fever, Plague, &c. but of the Doctor; so no Man is deprived of his Living by the Law, but the Lawyer.

However, Experience has an excellent Knack at instructing; it polishes the most unhew'd Understanding,

ing, and infills Wisdom into Fools: It often, indeed, raises upon its Chapmen at Discretion, and rates Prudence above the common Standard of the Market. Notwithstanding the Ware keeps some Proportion with the Price, and its Goodness atones for the Dearness. The good People were now satisfied. Attorneys give not their Labours *gratis*; they compose Differences, as the Wolf parted the Dogs in the Fable, by devouring the Contenders; and they concluded, that Beggary from the Hands of an Attorney was worse complexion'd than from those of a Neighbour; and that their Tongues were as infectious as the Teeth of a Crocodile, *Quod dentibus laceravit nunquam sanatur*; with this only Difference, that this Serpent bites to Death, and those sooth, fawn, and flatter into Poverty and Indigency.

They resolved therefore to compose their Differences rather *a l'amiable*, than at the Bar, and stand to the Arbitration of *Eusebius*, than to lay the Concerns at the Mercy of *Philargyrus*; his Virtue gave in Security for his Uprightness, and his Abilities qualified him for the Post of an Umpire, so that they were sure his Sentence would not clash with his Judgment, nor probably with Justice.

He knew a Beatitude in the Reward of a Peacemaker, and embraced the Trouble of this charitable Undertaking to purchase the Virtue. For why, says he, shall Charity be less courageous than Interest? Or court Ease more than Avarice? If Men put themselves on the Wheel for Money in Hand, and Hell in Reversion; if they rack their Brain, and torture Conscience to fence against Poverty, or to rear up a petty Fortune upon the Ruins of Honour and Humanity, why should Christians, upon an Apprehension of Trouble, decline a Duty that is noble and generous, pleasing to God, and glorious in the very Estimate of Men?

His House was always open to the Neighbourhood, and he was always at Leisure to hear their Grievances, and ready to redress them; his Abode was easy and inviting; his Behaviour without Stiffness or Formality;

for he thought to be great was not to be starched and supercilious; as he acted without Interest, so he pronounced without Favour; he regarded the Cause, without taking any Notice of the Person: Noise could not bias him, nor Numbers fright him, nor Interest draw him into any Injustice; he durst appear for injured Right, notwithstanding the Authority of the Opposer; he equally scorn'd to trample upon a Beggar, and to sneak to a Prince; all were so prepossessed with the Opinion of his Integrity, that even those who lost the Suit, rather blamed their Title, than his Judgment.

In the mean time *Philargyrus* was without Business; his Trade flagg'd, Custom fell off, and his Rents came in but slowly; those Streams that fed his Pockets were dammed up, or run in another Channel; so that his good Fortune was at a stand: Lucre ebb'd, and Curfes flow'd in upon him; he raged at his Disappointment, and poured out a Tun of Gall upon *Eusebius*, the last Retreat of Anger and Malice. For few People are unskilful at those Weapons; and he that cannot stab an Enemy with his Tongue, is fallen some Degrees below the State of Impotence.

Resolutions altered with his Passion, like Waves in a Tempest, one roll'd upon the Back of another. Sometimes he was for preferring an *Action* against him, for practising the Law without Licence; then for representing him to the Government as a disaffected Person, a *Jacobite* in Faction, and a Fanatic in Religion. But *Eusebius* laugh'd at his Threats, and pitied his Malice. He pitched at last upon a personal Conference, as the most effectual and less expensive way to come to Terms of Accommodation. And for this Reason he invited himself to Dinner. *Eusebius* was glad of the Occasion; he had no less a Desire to discourse with *Philargyrus*, than *Philargyrus* with him. The Lawyer had a mind to draw up his Grievances against the Gentleman, and the Gentleman to catechize the Lawyer; so that both Parties being eager to sound the Charge, what Wonder they clos'd, and soon came to a hot Engagement?

DIALOGUE III.

The Abuses of some Lawyers laid open; and Precepts given how to discharge their Duty like Christians.

EUSEBIUS perceived at Table *Philargyrus* had a better Stomach to complain than to eat; to fall upon his Host than his Dinner: For when Passion rises, Hunger falls; and Appetite sinks, when Gall overflows. However, *Eusebius* thought the Lawyer's Sourness was no Precedent for Rudeness; that one Man's Failures in Civilities could be no Justification of another's; but after Dinner he took him into the Garden, that he might throw up the Oil that oppressed his Stomach, and almost stopp'd Respiration. *Philargyrus* took hold of the Occasion, and thus address'd himself to *Eusebius*.

Plargyrus. I have often heard of your Piety and Wisdom, but how can I reconcile your Conduct to either? Be not displeased if I defer more to my own Knowledge, than to Fame; that cannot deceive, this is imposing: It's but Intelligence at second-hand, liable to Error in its Rise, and to Misrepresentation in the Conveyance. Pray, Sir, where is Prudence, when you embark in every Man's Affairs, and draw into your *Forum* all the Feuds of the Hundred? You have adjourn'd the Courts of *Westminster-hall* into your private Family; and pronounce more Sentences from an arm'd Chair, than my Lord Chief Justice from the Bench. A Man must have a low Esteem of Ease to resign it for Trouble, without Necessity, Profit, or even Invitation; and a mean Judgment to prostitute it to the Caprice of a mercurial and restless Temper.

But besides, Sir, I suppose you veil your Indiscretion under the Cover of Charity, and disguise an unquiet Humour with the Mask of a Virtue. But you should consider your Charity stands upon slippery Ground, and may sink into Injustice before you are aware. For Right and Wrong are measured by the Law; by this Tenure we hold our Lands, and our Lives, and all Title must stand or fall by the Con-

stitution of the Government. Now the Knowledge of the Law comes not unto us by Inspiration, nor is acquired by the sole Dictates of Nature. For the Rules of Justice are so unlike in one Meridian to those in another, that one would think Mens Species varied with the Climate, or the Elevation had a transmuting Quality, and could throw Things out of one Nature into another; that the civil Magistrate minted Virtue and Vice, which, like Coin, passed current only in his own Dominions. You must not therefore only read the *Magna Charta* of Nature, but must plod over *Reports* and *Statutes*, *Glasses*, and *Comments*, thumb *Codes* and *Pandeets*, and wander through all the Labyrinths of *Custom* and *Precedent*. This is a tedious Journey, and I fancy you have not been either at the Charges or Trouble of it. No, the Law is to you *Terra incognita*, an unknown Region. You understand the Language of the Bar, no more than that of the great *Cham*. How therefore will you come at the Sense, and square a Judgment by the Rules of Justice and Equity? I fear, good Sir, you kill some with Kindness, and pack others into Alms-houses, or quarter them upon the Parish out of Charity, who notwithstanding might have lived comfortably upon their own Fund, without being a Burden to themselves, or Incumbrance to their Neighbour. Whilst you wrong others, by giving them right, when they have only a Title to Poverty, and the Revenues of the Basket. I am willing to allow you to pronounce according to Conscience; but alas, Conscience without Law, is at best but an innocent Mistake; and tho' it exempts from Punishment in the next World, it exposes your Neighbour to Beggary in this. So that, tho' perchance it may be no Crime, it's a very real Injustice. Why don't you set up for a Doctor of the Faculty, as well as for a Gentleman of the *Inns of Court*, and post your *Recepe's* about the Country, as well as your *Verdicts*? It is less charitable to set a dying Man upon his Legs, than an expiring Title? To cure a broken Arm, than a disjointed Estate? You are sensible, I suppose, you are unqualified for the Employment; that you may send Poison for a Remedy, and Arsenic in Place

Place of a Cordial. But pray, Sir, does not your Charity throw you into the same Danger? You are as great a Stranger to the Law, as to the Dispensatory: And as slenderly read in *Coke* upon *Littleton*, as in *Galen* or *Hippocrates*. How therefore can you distinguish between Right and Wrong? The Law is the sole Standard of both; and even this is not so manifest as to flash Evidence and Conviction. The Sense sticks not on the Surface, nor perches upon the Top of the Letter; it must be often drawn out by Illation and Precedent; it's a Mystery nothing but Study and Practice can unriddle; withdraw therefore from Business, and let Controversies run in their ordinary Channel: And remember Charity is preposterous when it persuades a good Action, by doing an ill one.

The Gentleman expressed himself with Heat and Emphasis, with more Passion than Reason, and sometimes transgressed the common Rules of Decency and Breeding; but he pleaded his own Cause, and so we must sling in some Grains of Allowance; for the most lazy Tongue, when kick'd by Interest, and spurr'd on by Passion, will run post, and stumble, in the Hurry, over Modesty and Behaviour. *Eusebius* saw he ran too fast to continue the Career; that when he had shot all his Ammunition, he might be attack'd at greater Advantage; and that, probably, when Passion was talked down, Reason might get the Ascendant. He therefore heard his Harangue without Commotion or Interposing, and when *Philargyrus* had ended his Invective, *Eusebius* began his Justification.

Eusebius. I perceive that the *Temple* and *Gray's-Inn* have declared me a public Enemy to the *Hogben Moghen* learned in the Law, a Traytor to the Prince, and a Betrayer of the Liberty and Property of the Subject. In fine, guilty of all Crimes by Implications, though of none in Reality. You have drawn your Tongue in the Cause; you appear the first in the Field with your *Quota*, to prevent the Invasion, and all the dire Consequences of my Attempt upon the Bar and the Bench. But your Preparations for War are no less unseasonable than expensive; for I am resolved to entertain a friendly

Correspondence with your Corporation, and neither provoke nor trust you. You are dangerous both Ways ; your Friendship is as fatal as your Anger ; and he who confides in your Fidelity, receives more Wounds, than he who deserves your Resentment. However, Sir, you do well to keep the *longa roba* Militia in Discipline ; to skirmish in Jest, before you engage in Earnest.

You would certainly be to blame did you rate my Qualities by the Report of Fame, for she speaks at Random, and pronounces without Judgment or Sincerity : She claps Vices upon good Men, and Virtues upon Rascals : She lampoons or praises at a venture, and adapts Satire or Panegyric to the Exigence of Interest, and the Bias of Faction, as you stand off in Caution and Reserve for fear of a Surprise. I'll follow the same Method, for did I take the Size of your Morals and Religion by the public Cry, I should conclude you had a slender Provision of Conscience, and none of Honour or Honesty.

1. You question my Prudence for intruding myself into Business without Necessity or Invitation, and I your Religion for the Censure. If Wisdom persuade me to Christianity, why do I forfeit it by discharging the Duties of my Profession ? Now, you know, Christ commands me, not only to extend my Love to Friends, which is at most a *Pagan* or *Jewish* Virtue, but to my Enemies ; I must return Good for Evil, and Favours for Affronts. I must clothe the Naked, and drop my Alms into the Hands of the Indigent. I must reconcile Enemies, and bring Neighbours to a good Understanding ; and Christ pays the Labour with a Beatitude, *Blessed are the Peacemakers*. Certainly, this Earnest of Heaven balances the Labour ; and who engages in Business upon such a Promise, gives not his Pains *gratis*. Interest therefore and Duty invite me to Business, *viz.* the Precepts of Religion, and the Hope of Heaven, grounded upon the Promises of our Redeemer ; and these are my Commissions too ; so that my Conduct is neither illegal nor foolish : For I suppose, a Man who has Christ's Command, is armed with

with an unexceptionable Authority ; and that the broad Seal of Heaven, is as authentic as that of the Realm.

2. You are not satisfied of my Capacity, because I am a Stranger to the Laws. Perchance, Sir, I am more familiarly acquainted with them, than you suspect. I was always of Opinion, a Smack of the Law was no less necessary to manage an Estate, than to acquire one ; and that a Man to avoid Circumvention, must dive into all the little Artifices of the Bar, and the Mystery of Pleading ; for whoever looks down a Precipice, is within an Ace of a Fall ; and when the Snare lies out of Sight, it's beyond the Power of Forecast to avoid it ; for this Reason I have turned over the Law, and methinks it has something of the Prophet *Ezekiel's* River, in which a Lamb might walk, and an Elephat sink ; a Man who means well, may easily fall upon the Sense ; and who intends to play the Knave, may find a Cover for his Forgeries.

But after all, an ordinary Pittance of Law, with a good Conscience, rids more Suits than the Science of *Coke* with a bad one. Indeed, a Man beaten to the Trade, may wrangle and harangue better than one that is unexperienced in the Science of *Chicane* ; he may talk more plausibly, and embroider his Discourse with Statutes and Precedents.

But generally this is only flourish Terms, and *Westminster* Cant ; it raises a Dust, flings a Glitter on a bad Cause, and a Gloom over a good one : It racks the Law and Reason too : It raises Doubts, wiredraws Suits *in infinitum*, and makes Demonstration itself as two-handled as the Pagan Oracles. Whereas, would Men as studiously employ their Time to discover Truth, as to over-look it ; to end Debates as to perpetuate them ; Sentences would be more quick, and perchance more just ; at least the Subject would seldom plead away his whole Estate, to maintain a Part, nor find Justice more expensive than Extortion, and more barbarous than Violence : Nor, in fine, lose the Substance to chop at a Shadow.

I claim not the Prerogative of Infalibility, like my Neighbours, I am liable to Mistakes, and subject to Error; the Features of Wrong have often such a Resemblance with those of Right, that there is no distinguishing the one from the other; and therefore I never pretend my Judgment (like the Laws of the *Medes* and *Persians*) is irrevocable; those who are dissatisfied may appeal to higher Powers, and shelter themselves and their Concerns under the Protection of the Law. But, Sir, they have found by Experience, the Expedient is dangerous and chargeable; that those who raise Suits, are not proper to end them; and that few engage in the Law, without Wounds in the Skirmish, and those mortal too; nay, and by a strange Sympathy, they are entailed on the Family; and descend, like chronical Disempers, to their Posterity.

Philargyrus. So; here is a Satire upon the Profession, and all that practise it are Cheats and Impostors, at least by Construction; the Words will bear an Action; and did I not respect your Person, I might bring you upon your Knees, and penance your Indiscretion.

Eusebius. You misunderstand me, and throw a guilty Comment upon an innocent Text. No Man has a greater Value for the Profession than myself; it's the very Basis of Government, the Support of Society and Commerce; it's a Science that stops not at airy Notions, nor sleeps in Speculation and Revery; it sets Hand to work, puts Bounds to *Right* and *Wrong*, protects the Clown from Slavery, and the Nobility from the violent Encroachments of the Multitude. It's as necessary for the Conservation of Order, as Air for that of Life. Without it, the greatest Empires must fall into a Heap of Confusion, and the World become a Retreat to Thieves and Assassins. Power will determine Right, and Force justify Extortion and Violence; a long Sword will be Title, and Force will put in Possession.

As the Profession is commendable, so thousands of its Professors have been not only above Praise, but even above Calumny: Flattery could not fawn them into

an ill Action, nor Menaces fright them from a good one ; they were just in spite of Interest, and upright in spite of Temptation ; they bore up against the Provocations of Greatness and Favour ; they durst defend Justice under the Disguise of a Beggar, and prosecute Injustice, though protected by Title and Authority.

Who has not heard of the great *Boetius* ? His Probity out-shined his noble Extraction ; his Justice gave a Lustre to the Scarlet, and his Prudence dignified the very Dignity he possess'd ; he had the Privilege to revive all Learning, and at his Death to bury the whole *Roman* Grandeur in his own Tomb ; more glorious in his Disgrace, than in the very Meridian of his Fortune, and more happy in his Misery, than at the Top of his Prosperity. This brave Man was above Discouragement and ill Usage, and not so much as check'd into Indifferency by Injury, or carested ; he declar'd for Truth against Majesty, and declaimed against Oppression in the Face of Tyranny.

Who can sufficiently praise the incomparable Sir *Thomas More*, the Glory of our Nation, and the Phoenix of his Age : He was the most able Lawyer of his Time, and, what is more, the best Man : His Virtue out-stretch'd his Knowledge, and his Constancy was too hard for Cruelty ; he mounted from the Bar to the Bench, and carried on Virtue through all the Opposition of Avarice ; the Charms of his Honesty were irresistible ; they both conquered Prejudice, and captivated Envy itself ; and tho' he lost his Life on a scaffold, he went off with Fidelity. For what could King *Harry* condemn but Virtue ? Or who could he pronounce Guilty, but the Innocent ? A Disgrace from him was more honourable, than a Patent of Peerage, and to be strip'd of a Dukedom, than to receive one.

Tho' the Interest of Virtue is almost sunk in our degenerate Age ; tho' Conscience and Regularity have small footing among us ; yet I could single out some Gentlemen of the Law, whose Honesty vies with the most upright Examples of Antiquity, as well as their Science ; and if the Ancients have any Advantage,
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it's only that they are Originals, and our Moderns Copyists : These are Men that neither bend to Favour, now bow to Interest ; that prosecute Injustice in Power, and abet Justice under all the Disadvantages of Poverty and Confinement : They mind not the Plaintiff, but the Cause ; and rather stand for Right without Fee, than side with Wrong for the double.

Yet, I confess, the irregular Conduct of some, has thrown a Scandal on the very Profession ; and the Probity of many suffers in the Opinion of the World, for the mean Artifices of a few ; but what Wonder if some Children of wicked *Cain*, mingle their Blood, and their Practice, with the Race of *Seth* ? A Lawyer and a Cheat are now Terms almost synonymous ; and Men that thrive by the Law, are supposed to live without any. But it's unjust to stigmatize a whole Body, for the Failures of some Members ; the Punishment and the Fault should go together, and he alone should bear the Reproach of a bad Action, that had the Face and Pleasure of committing it. These are Men of low Fortunes, and profligate Manners, unable to rise by Merit ; they turn off to Over-reaching, and supply the want of Worth by Tricks and Artifices. Such, we say, rise by their Wits ; but it's a Mistake, they live by the Prostitution of Conscience, and Sale of Probity ; here, Sir, you have my Sense of the Matter ; and if you please to action me, take your Course.

Philargyrus. I perceive you will not have Men exert their Parts, nor employ their Talents for Lucre and Gain. No, they must rust in a Corner, or be lock'd up in a Closet ; they must be laid out in the public Service, or spent in Charities ; and if a Lawyer practises not to a Letter the Doctrine of Self-abnegation, if he casts an Eye on his own Interest as well as on his Neighbour's ; or has the Foresight to lay in a Provision for Age and Accident, he must be dubb'd a Cheat, and posted up for a Fourb and Impostor. I confess I am not so disengaged from all temporal Concerns, as to quite over-look them. I will oblige my Neighbour, but then I will not disoblige my Reason I will furnish out Life to the best Advantage. A Man may live by the

the sweat of his Brains, as well as by the Work of his Hands, and balance the Expence of his Studies, with the Fruits of his Practice. In fine, Sir, I will mind my Client's Interest, but intend not to forget my own; he shall have Law, but must return Money for the Barter.

Eusebius. Nay, I conceive, a Lawyer that drudges *Gratis*, will be overlaid with Custom, though scant of Money; and if he sets out with a low Fortune, he will not fall upon a higher in his Journey; for, as the World goes, Generosity and Good-nature are no thriving Embellishments; and when one leaves the Payment of an Obligation to the Discretion of the Receiver, the Acknowledgment seldom rises in Proportion of the Favour. But you mis-conceive my Meaning: I am not for throwing all the Labour upon the Lawyer, and all the Profit upon the Client. No, let him keep within the Bounds of Honesty, and I have no Exceptions against him; a Setter of *Meum* and *Tuum* deserves a Salary, as well as a Setter of Bones: But, as I would not have a Surgeon make Wounds for the Gain of curing 'em; nor a Doctor poison a Patient to force upon him an Amulet; so a Gentleman of the Bar should not set People together by the Ears, to be paid for the parting them.

Philargyrus. That is, when two commence a Suit, we must compose the Difference *a l' amiable*, and rather run to Arbitration than the Law. Indeed our Trade would go on at a strange Rate were Umpires in Fashion; *Cargo* would not pay the Voyage.

Eusebius. Suppose such a Project were put in Execution, where is the Harm? Tho' you might need less Law, you would practise more Gospel; and if the Lawyer lost, the Christian would gain by the Expedient. Your Vails might be slender, however they would be just; and I think a Crown with Innocence, is more valuable than a Pound with a Crime; but besides, you would still find Fools enough to impose upon, for the World is stock'd with *Neck or Nothing*; with Men that will make over by Retain an Estate of a thousand
Pound

Pound *per Annum*, to a Lawyer, in Expectation of being pleaded into another of two Hundred.

Philargyrus. You will have us keep within the Bounds of Justice, you caution us against Injustice, explain the Jargon; for I fear our Notions disagree, and that my Idea is more indulgent, and of greater Latitude than yours. I believe, according to your Scheme, a Man must make the least of his Parts to be honest, and play the good-natur'd Fool to be a Saint in your Calendar: But to be free with you, I intend to sell my Pains by Inch of Candle. I'll not venture one single Pulse but upon good Security, and high Interest; and if I can get Ten in the Hundred, why shall I refuse the Offer? Injustice is a Chimera when both Sides agree. Able Lawyers are now as scarce as Corn was the last Year: Why then shall they not tax their Labour at Discretion, and raise the Market as well as Farmers?

Eusebius. I fear indeed our Notions of Justice are as wide as our Practice; Lawyers are no straight-lac'd Casuists in their own Concerns; they steer by the old Philosophical Principle, *Nothing is unjust that is profitable*. But tho' these Maxims have Practice for their Warrant, they have neither Reason nor the Gospel; and without this Support, the most establish'd Custom is only Vice triumphant. Now, if you please, I will deliver my Judgment upon the Matter.

I.

It's certain Law-suits are warrantable merely by Accident: Two cannot have Right to the same Thing; but because the Title is uncertain, the contending Parties may appeal to the Law, and must acquiesce to the Judgment of the Court.

II.

Hence it's clear, when Right stands evidently for one side, a Lawyer cannot plead for the other; if he does, he stands no less guilty of Injustice, than if he help a Pad to take a Purse upon the Highway. Indeed his Crime appears more genteel in the Eyes of Men, but in the Sight of God it's ten Times more monstrous; for he abuses a Virtue to practise a Vice; and endeavours

vours

vours to ruin Innocence by the Law, that was enacted to protect it ; he turns the Sanctuary into a Butchery, and stabs Justice at the Foot of her own Altar.

III.

When solid Reasons support both Sides, Right lies in the Dark, and therefore you may plead for either, but not for both ; for which Party soever has Right, you are sure to be in the Wrong : Two can have no Title, *in solidum*, to the same thing. Indeed, to take with both Hands is a present Remedy against an empty Pocket, but a Poison to the Conscience : For double Fees oppresses the Stomach ; nor is there any Cure but a Vomit, that is, Restitution. Such Men are Nufances to Society ; and for my Part I am of the Satyr's Opinion in the Fable, that it's dangerous to trust one *that blows hot and cold* ; nor would I have any more to do with him, than with an *Italian Bravo*, who will dispatch my Enemy for a Crown, and myself for a couple. Those old *Israelites* that halted between *Bell* and the true God, were neither staunch *Jews*, nor thorough-pac'd *Gentiles*, but a Compound of two Species united in one Monster. What are our Jack-of-both side Gentlemen, but an Offspring of the same Race ? They plead for Justice on the one side of the Mouth, and against it on the other ; protect it, and prosecute it in the same Moment, and so cheat both Clients and themselves into the Bargain : Whosoever buys either Wealth or Honour at the Price of a Crime, over purchases. Tell me not, *There must be no interfering between Business and Religion, that if the Pulpit will not agree with the Bar, we must thrive in the World, and make the most of Labour*. I am apt to believe those unchristian Principles have made the very Laws a greater Grievance, than those that break them ; that they have heaved some into fair Livings, and others out of them ; and that they permit not Conscience to grow too hard for Interest : But however, Sir, if the Bar be at Variance with the Bible, whatever you gain in Hand, will bear no Proportion with what you must expect in Reversion. For I cannot think that he
makes

makes the most of his Parts, who writes and pleads himself into ten thousand Pounds *per Annum*, for some Years, and into inconceivable Torments for an Eternity. But you must thrive in the World ! In God's Name, provided the Means be handsome, neither unjust before God, nor scandalous in the Sight of Men ; but let me tell you, he who resolves to rise is already within an Ace of being a Cheat ; it's ten to one he never formalizes upon the Means ; when Covetousness has got the Reins, there is no holding it in with Notions.

IV.

You must not draw out Law-suits in *Sæcula Sæculorum*, nor stretch them in Lengths, till a poor Client loses both Patience and Money ; this is to join Murder to Robbery ; to take a Man's Purse with one Hand, and his Life with the other ; it's a Medley of Cruelty and Injustice ; first put me upon the Rack, between Hope and Fear, and then force me to pay the Executioner for my Torment. A Suit now runs for Life, and oftentimes descends down to the fourth Generation. So that the Law is a Labyrinth ; when once you are engaged, there is no Retreat ; if you are strait-handed, the Lawyer becomes resty, he will not stir, and, like an *ignis fatuus*, he leaves you in the Mire ; if you see him high, and rain down upon him plentiful Showers of Guineas, he spins out the Cause to drain your Pocket ; so that he either does too much, or too little, and perpetuates Disputes no less by being too well fee'd, than ill : Every one complains of the Grievance ; however, it goes on, and is like to continue till our Benchers have either *quietus est*, and More's Utopian Gentlemen are call'd to the Bar, and the Bench, in their Leather-Breeches.

V.

There must be no cross-biting Evidences, nor frightening ; no laughing, no questioning them out of Truth and their Senses ; to baffle a true Evidence is no less unjust, than to countenance Perjury. This is reported to have been said at the Bar, but by no means on the Bench,

Bench. *Well, good Man Leather-Breeches* (said once a grave Judge from the Bench) *what have you for Swearing*. He supposed a Peal of Laughter might dismount the Clown, ruffle his Memory, and make him trip in his Disposition; but he mistook his Man, and met with his Match; the Fellow was too sturdy to be scared by Furs or Scarlet; or to flinch for a Sarcasm. *My Lord, had you no more for Lying*, replied he, *than I for Swearing, you might have wore Leather-Breeches still*. Now a Man, who upon so solemn an Occasion dares affront a legal Witness, will certainly at a dead-lift suborn a false one; and though his Design miscarried, his Malice was at full Swarth. I know we are pleased to call this unhandsome dealing with, but Names make no Alteration in Things. The Scripture terms it cheating, and we must rather appeal to its Verdict, than to Custom, or *Calapine*. *Quevedo* tells us, that at the Sound of the Trumpet to Judgment, an Attorney would have demurr'd, upon pretence he had got a Soul was none of his own, and that his Body and Soul were not Fellows. I believe some Lawyers will have more Conscience in the next World, than they have in this; and, at the Day of Account wish, that they had made over their Souls to their Legatees, as well as their Estates; but they'll not dare to pretend their Souls and Bodies are not Fellows; for, alas, they have gone halves in the Crime, as well as the Pleasures and Profit, and, by consequence, must share in the Punishment.

A Man that will thrive, easily slides into an Injustice; but then it's almost as hard to recover, as to return from Hell: For Injustice seems to be one of those Crimes that are neither forgiven in this World, nor in the next. Indeed a Man may repent, but the Conditions are so hard, so mortifying, that not one of a thousand will sign them. For, in fine, an Injustice is not pardon'd without a full Restitution, and Reparation of Damages; and these run often as high as the Lawyer's Gains; notwithstanding, tho' you have raked together ten thousand Pounds *per Annum*, by defending
unjust

unjust Suits, and stretching out just ones ; by baffling true Evidences, or bribing Knights of the Post, you must disgorge and fall into your own first Poverty, as naked of Support as when you first set out. Now, is it not against the Grain to expose your Reputation to Censure and Obloquy, to shrink in your Figure and to sink into nothing ? However, these bitter Pills must down, unless you can resolve to welter in Fire and Brimstone eternally. It's hard, I confess, to fling up a fair Estate ; yet better, than to fling up all Title to Heaven, and to entail upon you God's Curse in this World, and his Vengeance in the other.

No Man in his Wits would purchase an Estate for his Child at the Expence of his Life ; why then will he at the Price of his Soul ? Is this so contemptible, and that of so superlative a Value ? One must have a faint Idea of future Punishments and Rewards, thus to misplace his Judgment and Esteem ; he must suppose his Soul vanishes into nothing, when his Body falls into Dust ; that the River of *Phlegethon* is as real and tormenting as the Lake of Brimstone, and that the Pains of the Devils and Damned, as romantic as those of *Tytius* and *Sisyphus* : In fine, at most, that Heaven is no more pleasing than *Spring-Garden*, nor Hell no more tormenting than *Newgate* or the *Compter*.

Now the best Method to avoid this Difficulty is to avoid the Sin ; it's ten times more easy to abstain from Rapine, than to repent of it. It's not hard to keep within the Bounds of Justice, if Avarice get not the Ascendant ; but if this Vice runs away with our Heart, we stop at nothing. Strong Desires are strong Temptations to use ill Means ; in the hurry of Passion, Conscience is seldom heard ; he that is bent upon a thing will have it right or wrong.

Nor will his Reservedness baulk your Fortune : A Lawyer that has the Reputation of an honest Man, will always find Employment. For who will not rather put his Concerns in the Hands of one who makes a Conscience of over-reaching a Client, than lay himself at the Mercy of a Knave ? Honesty is esteem'd by all, tho' few got to the Price of the Purchase, and even

even those who practise it the least, are most eager Pretenders to it. Indeed your Fortune will not rise so fast, but then the Edifice will be more firm and lasting: Those Buildings that rise on a sudden, fall in a Moment; like precipitated Births, they are never long lived, and generally bury the Builder under the Ruins. Gain never relishes better than when it's just, and Advantage is almost doubled by being lawful. Pray, Sir, be not displeased at my Freedom; such plain Dealing is necessary to recover Justice, and disarm its Enemy. I expose the Practice to reform the Man. I may perchance draw upon me the Anger of some guilty Benchers, and expose my Person to Calumny and Discountenance: but I shall only pity their Blindness, and despise their Malice; for fear not to cross upon a Vice tho' never so prevailing, nor to oppose a Grievance tho' back'd by Number, and supported by Prescription. I will please no Man to his Disadvantage, nor fix him in an Error by a Complement, nor care for him out of his Duty and Happiness.

Philargyrus stood upon Thorns, and heard the Discourse with a thousand Grimaces; he was Proof to homely and good Counsel, by a kind of *Antiperistasis*, hardened in Ill; you might as well have preach'd an *Aethiopian* into a *White*, as this Attorney into an honest Christian. Ill Habits hung not loose upon him, but twisted themselves with his Nature; they sunk into his very Soul, and debauch'd him in Practice and Principle too.

Look ye, Sir, said he to *Eusebius*, you have regaled me with Cant, with Flourishes, and a Glut of Casuistry; but I will not be beaten out of my Road by hard Words, University-Jargon, and strain'd Speculations. I live by the Law, not by Casuistry; and that stands upon Precedent, not Reason: How many brave Gentlemen have beat great Estates out of the Law, by the Force of Merit and Industry, and plead Coronets on their Coaches, and themselves into the House of Peers! They work'd on the same Materials I do; steered by the same Compass, and were governed by the same Principle: Yet, where are these Restitutions! Believe me, Sir, your
Doctrines

Doctrine is not calculated for our Elevation or Age. Prescription runs against such out-dated Practices, and that is Law: A Man that will part with an Estate, deserves none; and he that returns a *Lordship* out of Tenderneſs of Conſcience, reſigns his Wits in the Bargain. Pray let us not interfere; keep your Estate, and ſuffer me to glean up a handſome Livelihood. Conſcience will not interpoſe between me and Profit; Wealth brings Eaſe, and Poverty hangs a Man upon the Tenterſ.

When *Philargyrus* was gone, *Eusebius* returned to himſelf; the parting Complement of the Lawyer had almoſt ſcared him into a Trance: He was at a ſtand to determine whether he was above Ground or under, in Hell among the Damn'd, or in *England* among the Living. Such Stroaks of Libertiniſm ſat on every Tittle of his Diſcourſe; ſuch Sallies of Atheiſm, that one would have thought the Man had trick'd himſelf not only out of Religion, but out of human Nature; there was no Start of Paſſion, no ſudden Surprize to diſcompoſe him, he ſpoke under cool Blood, under Thought and Reflection; all theſe Circumſtances enflame the Guilt, and ſwell the Reckoning: This Farewel damp'd *Eusebius*, and brought into his Mind thoſe uncomfortable Words of our Bleſſed Saviour, *Many are called, but few are choſen*. To what Height of Madneſs, ſaid *Eusebius*, does Avarice puſh Men, when once it has got the Maſtery of Conſcience? To pawn one's Soul for a Fee, and Heaven for a double one: Is it not Frenzy to Exceſs; and Lunacy beyond Expreſſion? All the Mad-houſes in the Nation are unable to furniſh ſuch Inſtances of Folly; ſuch Strains of Diſtraction and Stupidity. Did Men believe no future State, I conceive they might make the moſt of this; they might ſorage upon their Neighbour's Land, and cruize upon their Purſes, and ſtore their Magazines with Plunder and Rapine. But to believe the Doctrine of Chriſt, and to act by that of *Hobbs*; to own a Hell, and ſweat to feel it, is extraordinary and ſurpriſing. *Let my Soul be rather with the old Philoſophers,*

phers, than with those of our modern Lawyers ; perchance they might have had less Faith, but I am sure they had more Honesty ; and if their Religion was worse, their Practice was better.

DIALOGUE IV.

How Eusebius behaved himself towards his Neighbours.

THO' *Eusebius* lived in Retreat, he had not forsworn Company, nor disbanded from Society. Piety is neither sullen nor solitary ; it cares not indeed to be crowded with Visitors, nor always to be tied up to Ceremonies, to be pestered with Flies, nor tormented with Flatterers ; yet it's never behind-hand in paying those Duties Civility requires, and Decency calls for : He liv'd in a neighbourly Correspondence with all the Gentry, and received and returned both Visits and Invitations : His Temper was too serious to be affected by the younger Fry, that place Mirth in Noise, and Diversion in Extravagances ; that measure a Welcome, not by the Bottle, but the Gallon ; and suppose they are not treated like Men, unless they are drunk down to the Beast ; but if those Sparks had small Inclination to his Company, he had less to theirs, and rather kept his Time and Liberty to himself, than sling them away upon such insignificant Trifles ; he neither could mend their Morals, nor endure their Follies ; however, he distinguished their Quality from their Vices ; and tho' upon Occasion he lash'd *these*, he always treated their Persons with Regard. Nay, he so timed his Reprehensions, that they rather seemed to fall in by Hazard, than Design ; and tho' he spoke in Jest, he instructed in Earnest. In fine, he rather glanc'd at their Faults by short *Innuendo's*, than attack'd them in Form, and endeavour'd to raise a Blush, not their Anger ; for he knew that Choler cramps Reason, and when this flies off the Hinges, a Man is no more fit to receive good Counsel than a Tempest.

For

For this Reason he used to say, Prodigals must rather be reclaimed by Surprise than Force, by Kindness than Reproach: They will follow, but not drive; they endure a Remedy if applied with a gentle Hand, but then they wince if you gall them; like that of Children, their Physic must be palatable; the Pills will not down unless they are gilt; he therefore disapproved those hot-headed Zealots, who give Vice no tolerable Quarter; they treat it with the same Freedom in Scarlet, as in Linsey-woolsey, and catechise a Lord with no more Ceremony than a Peasant: But they take false Measures; great Men must be complimented into their Duty, as well as out of it. Civility works more kindly upon 'em than Rudeness.

Though the young Sparks kept aloof from *Eusebius*, the more sober coveted his Acquaintance; he was grave, yet he had nothing starch'd, nothing stiff; his Conversation was easy, and he always modelled his Discourse to the Time and Company; he hated those old Fops who press for Submission upon the Younger, with a stately Mean and reserved Air; and supposed Age and Grey-hairs give them a just Title to Respect. This is, said he, to tax Conversation, and to put the Company under Contribution for Defence and Regard; it renders the Pretender cheap, and Society a Nuisance. In fine, he never declined any just Condescension, and would rather stretch Complaisance a Point, than screw up his Gravity to Reservedness or Importunity.

He was a declared Enemy to Prodigality and Nearness, he proportion'd his Expences, as I have said, to his Income; he never spared Money when Occasions required it; nor flung it away *mal à propos*, to please a Frolic; he thought both Extreams equally vicious, that a sordid Parsimony was ungentle, and Profuseness foolish. When he treated his Friends, he affected Neatness rather than Grandeur, and rather sought to gratify the Taste with Delicacies, than the Eye with Variety; for Feasts are to entertain the Palate, not Curiosity. In drinking he followed *Abassuerus's* Orders, *Vinum quoque ut magnificentia Regia dignum erat, abundans*
 &

Et præcipuum ponebatur, nec erat qui nolentes cogeret ad bibendum: sed sicut Rex statuerat præponens mensis singulos de Principibus suis, ut sumeret unusquisque quod vellet; he thought it no less uncivil to press his Guests to drink, than to stint them, and could not endure an *English* Principle, that Custom has naturalized, and Intemperance has made free Denizon of the Country. A Man thinks himself welcome by halves, that is not quite drown'd in a Barrel, and ill used till his Body he turned into a Hoghead, and his Head into a Windmill.

This Conduct, so contrary to the establish'd Laws of *English* Hospitality, displeased some; and a Gentleman took once the Freedom to inform him, that he lay under a disadvantageous Character for his Frugality. Sir, said he, I doubt not of your Generosity, but People unacquainted with your Temper impeach you with Avarice; a single Bottle will not wash off the Asperision; you must marshal 'em upon the Table by Dozens: We love to look our Enemies in the Face, and must be carried from the Table, as well as from the Breach; for we drink as well as fight, like Men, and all your *French* Ragousts are unpalatable, unless high-season'd with Burgundy and Claret. When the Ladies retire, adjourn to a Bye-room, and be sure to march at the Head of the Brigade, and lead it upon the Attack: Let your Provisions answer the Number of the Assailants; an *Englishman* can cope with as many Bottles of *French* Wine, as *Frenchmen*; and you know one to six is an Over-match: Thus, Sir, you'll retrieve your Honour, and recover your Reputation from the Imputation of Stinginess, and the ungentle Slur of Parsimony.

This Gentleman had a real Esteem for *Eusebius*, but none for his Practice; he bore an Office, and possess'd a fair Estate in the Country. He was a good Companion at the Pot, and an Adorer of the Pipe: He laugh'd at those who placed Glory in Wounds and broken Legs, and run their Heads against Bastions and

Half-moons for a Place in the *London Gazette*, or the *Post-Boy*; he would not venture one single Pulse for the taking *Lisle* or *Tournay*, nor fling his Money upon Doctors and Surgeons, much less be carried, like a Calf, from the Attack to his Tent, or his Grave: No, said he, I come not into the World to be cannonaded, or bayoneted out of it; I will nurse up Life to the Extent of Nature, and leave it in my Bed, not in a Ditch.

However, tho' the Deputy-Lieutenant had no Inclination for Camp-glory, he was ambitious of Fame; but then he resolved to fetch it rather from the Cellar, than the Field; and indeed, he was a kind of *Flagman*, a *Vice-Admiral*, in all those Expeditions of Good-fellowship; so beaten to the Trade, that no Body durst contend for the Command. So that, though by Commission he was only Deputy-Lieutenant, his topping Embellishments entitled him to the Lieutenantcy of the Country. I have seen Right Worshipful knock down half a Dozen under the Table in a trice, and then he will clap and crow like a Game-cock. Nay, he swore he deserv'd a public Compliment for the Exploit, as well as our great Duke for his *Blangy*; because he flew more with his own Hand, and lost fewer than this mighty General; nay, and kept the Field into the Bargain. A Friend desired him not to prostitute his Quality and Commission to Scorn and Obloquy, by so mean, so unmanly a Vice; but he answer'd, those lie under a great Mistake, that mark'd it with Unmannerliness. We drink like Beasts, said he, when we drink least, but like Men when we drink till we can neither go nor stand.

Eusebius was struck at his quaint Harangue; and more at his Principles: He thought Caution itself might sometimes be overseen, and Sobriety trepanned by Company into Intemperance: but to gauge Breeding by the Barrel, to turn Drinking into an Employment, and the Infamy of Drunkenness into a Perfection of human Nature was extraordinary; he thank'd the Gentleman for his Advice, but desired leave to follow his own Method,

Method, till he had offered some better Reason to change it.

For, Sir, said he, you persuade me to rescue my Honour from the Imputation of a pretended Vice, by committing a real one. You provoke me by the Motives of Glory to Actions that degrade a good Man, and force an ill one even to blush. You misapply the Notions of Honour and Infamy; you blame and praise in the wrong Place; and thus you pronounce Monstrousness to be Proportion, and the Blemishes of Mankind to make up its Beauties. I lie, you say, under the Asperision of Avarice, and nothing will remove the Calumny, unless I drown my Guests in Claret and Canary. I confess the Remedy seems ten times worse than the Disease; I would rather be pointed at for a *Miser*, than be condemned for a *Drunkard*; that Vice indeed is uncreditable, but this is brutal; that makes an ill Man, but this throws him out of his Species, and turns him into a Beast; nay, lays him below the vilest; for he is a Beast of Man's Creation, and by consequence more monstrous than the lowest Part of God's; or rather he is a reasonable Beast, and irrational Man.

What a noble Spectacle must it be to see a Club of Gentlemen of Figure and Quality metamorphosed into *Bethlems*, and their Palaces into Mad-houses; to see them play the Ape and the Swine, and run out into Lengths of Folly and Extravagance? No doubt, it's an honourable Employment for a Master to play the *Mimic* and *Scaramouch* before his Men, to entertain them with Farce *gratis*, and to fling a merry Interlude into their Salary; to out-do the *Roman* Bacchanals in Distractions, and to strain Jollity not into annual (for once a Year a wise Man may have Leave to be mad) but into a daily Madness.

Good God! What a Scene did I once behold at Sir B—F—'s! It gave me such a Surfeit of Wine, that for a Twelve-month the very Sight of a Bottle cast me into a Sweat and Agony. I began almost to believe that *Pythagoras's* Transmigration was rather a Truth, than Allegory or Fable; for in the Space of an Hour a dozen Gentlemen commenced Beasts, and all

of different Species ; there were *Apes, Bears, Lions, and Jackalls* : Some *roar'd*, others *yelp'd*, and others *howl'd*. In one Corner there was making Quarrels, in another Love ; here they sung, there they blasphemed ; they kissed in one Place, and boxed in another : In fine, there was a Medley of Farce and Tragedy, of Folly and Madness, a Subject for Laughter and Tears ; but when they began to return home, they play'd all at *cross* Questions, the Postilion crept behind the Coach, the Coachman into it, and the Master into the Box : For Wine is a Leveller, it either raises the Man to the Master, or throws down the Master to the Man. When Reason sleeps, Extravagance breaks loose ; Quality and Peasantry pig together ; there is no Difference between a Lord and a Lacquey, but that he is more to blame ; in a Word, they were in no Condition for a Journey ; so that the Gentlemen were conveyed into Beds, and the Equipage cramp't in the Court.

Well, Sir ! replied the Deputy-Lieutenant, Over-fights will happen, but Good-fellowship must go on, and a neighbourly Correspondence be improved.

As much Good-fellowship, said *Eusebius*, and Kindness as you please, provided you flush right Notions, and frame an Idea of both by the Rule of Reason, not of Custom ; but I cannot persuade myself the Laws of Good-fellowship command me to drink away my Health and my Wits for a Frolic : Health is no Nuisance, nor Reason a Burden. If you had a Fancy to a Cup of Poison, does the Ceremony of Good-fellowship order me to pledge you in the same Liquor ? Now Over-drinking turns the best Ale in the Nation, and the best Wines in *France*, into Poison. Indeed, they dispatch not by sudden Assault, as *Ratsbane* or *Arsenic*, but by Mine and Siege ; however their Operation is sure, and though their Malignity be slow, it's mortal.

Nor can I think any Principle of Friendship obliges me to help a Man to destroy his Estate, to sink his Family into Beggary, his Person into Contempt, and his Body into Diseases : Now your Kindness wades farther into Mischief ; I must dose his Reason, and stab

his

his Soul, nay, and my own too. No Man certainly dares own this for Kindness, who is not actually drunk. Besides, you may as well entertain Heat with Cold, as Friendship with Drinking. Alas, good Sir, when Wine flies into the Head, Glasses fly about the Ears; for when once Reason is drowned, Passion always swims on the Surface; most of those Quarrels that end in Blood, begin in Wine; Jollity drunk too high, degenerates into Fury.

But, besides, Drunkenness is a Sin, and of a very black Dye; it's one of those that shuts Heaven's Gate, and opens that of Hell to the Offender. Now, though it were as genteel as it's clownish, that very Consideration should fright those from the Practice, that bound not their Hope or Fear with *Sight* and *Sense*; Kindness and Good-fellowship must not take place of our eternal Welfare, nor Ceremony of our Duty. If therefore Drunkenness be a Sin, is it none to invite, none to persuade a Neighbour to it? Must a Gentleman be mark'd with Infamy, because he will not turn off Conscience; nor purchase the Reputation of House-keeping, at the Expence of his Soul? I am not so fond of Esteem as to buy it by a base Action; nor so fearful of Contempt as to avoid it by a Sin. I will not transform myself into a Brute for the Reputation of a fine Man, nor stoop to the Office of a Tempter, for the Title of Generosity. No, no, Sir, in my House Guests shall never be stinted, nor forced. I leave them to their own Discretion, and invite them to be merry, but not to be mad. I love a cool Head, and a calm Conscience; and I had rather see Flights of Distraction in *Bethlem*, than of Extravagance at home. To conclude, I had rather be reproach'd for Sobriety, than caressed for Intemperance; and lampoon'd for a Virtue, than panegyric'd for a Vice.

Well, well, Sir, replied the Knight, we will not fall out for the Matter: Let every Man take his Way, but give me leave to tell you, Conscience and all your Fiddle-faddles will not screen you from Censure. When we go to a Merry-meeting, we leave that Lumber at home; but when we are summon'd to a *Quarter-Sessions*,

Sessions, or so, then indeed we take it up behind us, if the Horse will carry double, for though it may be of Use in a Business of *Meum* and *Tuum*, it's a Burden at a Feast, a Controller of Mirth, and a Poison to Good-fellowship.

Eusebius blest'd himself at the grave Gentleman's Preachment; to hear Magistrates plead for Riot, and *Justices of Peace* for Disorder, seem'd surprising; but the Evil lies deep, there is no removing it; it's become a Branch of *English* Property, and we will no more part with the Vice of Drinking, than with our *Magna Charta*. We have received it from our Forefathers, and improved the Talent to Admiration; one Man infects another, and the present Set of Tiplers will hand down the Disease to their Posterity; and thus the Distemper will run on without Cure, and continue without End.

DIALOGUE V.

Of his Recreations.

EUSEBIUS was not so engaged in Piety, as wholly to lay aside all Recreation; he knew that some Divertisement was necessary to refresh the Body, and unbend the Mind; that a continual Application dispirits the one, founders the other, and renders both unfit for Action; but then he took care not to turn Diversion into Business, nor to play away his Time, like Children, in Trifles. Age had taken off the Passion he had for the Sport of Hunting; his Body could not endure the Violence, and his Inclination carried him to more moderate Exercises; he was often upon the Bowling-green in Summer, and to entertain Conversation would take a Game at Cards; but then he played for Diversion, not Gain; and would never venture more upon a Cast, than he could lose without the Danger of Impatience; for when Bets runs high, Solicitude baulks Pleasure, and the Fear of losing turns Sport into Pain and Penance; it boils up the Passions into a Ferment,

Ferment, heats the Blood, and then an unlucky Hit flings a Man upon the Tenters.

Whatever he won was a Bank for the Poor; a kind of *Pecunia Sacra*, always employed in Charity; so that he fell upon a Secret (more beneficial than the pretended Philosopher's Stone, and more real) of turning Diversion into Virtue, and of raising the most ordinary and lowest Actions to the Dignity of the most divine. Thus at once he refresh'd his Body, and improved his Time, or (in the Apostle's Language) pray'd and play'd, recruited his Spirits, and supply'd his Neighbour; pass'd his Time in Mirth, and yet redeem'd it.

However, he used even the most harmless Recreations, as I said, like Physic for Health, or like Meat for Sustenance; for, said he, they are not the Business either of a Gentleman or of a Christian, and therefore whoever suffers them to usurp his Time (allowed for more noble Employments) plays the Child, though not the Innocent, while he thus trifles away his Life, and bowls and cards away those precious Moments, that once he will recall with Tears, but never recover. He therefore retired as soon as Civility permitted, and entertained himself with Reading; but he never would open a Book that struck at Morality, or questioned Religion; the one debauches Practice, the other Principle; and he used to say, bad Books are the worse for being well writ; they subdue almost without Resistance, when they mingle Corruption with Wit, and convey Poison into Pleasure; but he spent whole Hours in the Lecture of those that treat of Piety, that lighten the Understanding, and warm the Will, that point out the Way to Virtue, and with a Resolution to purchase it. Such he looked upon as sure Guides, and profitable Entertainments; as Supports in Solitude, and Friends in all the different Occurrences of Life and Action; they censure without Reproach, and praise without Flattery; they neither fawn on Gentlemen, nor overlook Peasants, but, like Pictures made to Sight, look equally upon all: Nor was he content with the bare Speculation; he knew the Virtue of a Chri-

stian consists not in the Knowledge of his Duty, but in the Exercise of it, and therefore he drew by the Life; he copied from those Originals, and joined Practice to Theory, and thus he weaned himself from all those worldly Things Men so eagerly pursue as Flies; he neither hoped for any temporal Advantage, nor feared any Adversity; his Desires looked beyond Time, and nothing but the Pains of the Damned were able to awake his Fear; so that he embraced Crosses and Favours with the same Affections, and always said, these led us indeed the easiest Way to Heaven, and those the most secure; and thus he was neither fond of Life, nor dreaded Death, but equally disposed to keep his Post, or to abandon it at the first Command of his great Master.

And indeed, he had such an Empire over his Passions, such a Submission to all the Designs of Providence, that he seem'd, if not above the Reach, at least above the Sense of Adversity, even when he lay under the Weight of a Misfortune. His Niece, whom he loved with the Tenderness of a Father, fell sick of a burning Fever: She deserved indeed his Affection; for she was set off with all the Perfections of a Woman, and enriched with all the Virtues of a Christian. One might truly say, with the wise Man, she lived a great while, though she died at seventeen, and that she was ripe for Heaven in the very Spring of her Age: She pass'd through a long Course of Pains, with an invincible Patience, and expected Death rather with the Courage of a Hero, than the Timorousness of a Woman.

Every one thought this Accident would put *Eusebius's* Philosophy to the Stretch; that a Blow in so sensible a Part, would strike out some Symptoms of Weakness; but they mistook the Man; he felt the Loss, but sunk not under it: He let fall indeed a Tear at parting, but wiped it off in a Moment, and he told his Friends, who wonder'd at his Unconcernedness, To be sorry she is not with me, when I believe she is better from me, is a Mark I value my Satisfaction above hers, and mourn for the Living more than for the Dead; it's Infirmary, not true Kindness, when we will not resign to ourselves the Happiness of a Friend.

I believe she is in a State of Bliss, why then should I weep for her, whom I suppose in a Place we all wish to be settled in? If she be not, my Affection will not ease her Torments, nor raise her from her Grave: So that my Grief will either be unseasonable or vain; it may render me miserable, but will add not a Grain to her Felicity, nor abate one of her Pains. But, in fine, God, who gave her Life, is pleased to recall the Gift, what Reason have I to complain of hard Usage? Rather I thank his Goodness for having lent me her so long, than blame him for taking her from me so soon; his Favours are free Gifts, no Debts: It's our Duty to receive them with Thankfulness, and to return them at the first Call with Submission and Frankness. These Dispositions seem'd so noble, so generous, that they became the Gentleman, as well as the Christian, and every Man confessed his Character could not be raised too much, nor esteem'd enough: For Virtue, like the Sun, is more gaz'd on when eclipsed, than when it glitters in Prosperity, and we may be sure it's Sterling when it bears the Touch-stone of Affliction.

I cannot omit one Passage that happened in this young Lady's Sickness; it shews the Skill and the Conscience of Doctors are all of a Piece, and that they are oftener fee'd for killing than curing a Patient, or at least for doing no Harm, than for doing Good. I thought *Moliere* lash'd the Gentleman of the College with too much Freedom, that he entertain'd *Paris* and the Court at the Expence of the Faculty, and drew their Pictures at random, without any Regard to the Original; but the Jury of Physicians that sat upon this poor Lady's Life, alter'd my Opinion, and forced me to own, that the Comedian has thrown more Truth than Fiction in their Character, and rather falls short than over-flourish'd it.

And first, half an Hour slipt by in Ceremony and Compliment; then they gave an Account of Yesterday's Rendezvous, and expos'd the Diary of their Debauches, had not the Doctor in Ordinary put them in mind they had forgot their Errand, and returned with their Fee, without leaving so much as a *Recipe*; but then they

would not take the Pains to step into her Chamber, but referred themselves to the Information of the Ordinary: he regaled the *Juncto* with a Dissection of the Distemper, and pillaged *Willis de Febris* to rig out his Harangue. *Galen* and *Hippocrates* were brought upon the Stage, nay, and *Aristotle*: To complete the Farce, Greek and Latin were served up in Plenty, and one Aphorism tumbled in upon the Back of another. A Maid told him the Lady grew worse, and that she was drawing towards her Agony: The Gentleman laugh'd at her Message. *It's impossible*, said he, *Hippocrates is plain that Fevers come to a Crisis the fourteenth or one-and-twentieth Day; now this is only the tenth: How then can your Mistress be so near her End?*

Hippocrates may say what he pleases, replied the Maid, but if you dispatch not soon, your Remedy will come too late.

Has she taken the Dose of *Emetic*? says the Doctor. Yes, answered the Maid; but it had no Effect.

Bon, cries the Consult, a happy Prognostic.

It cast her into Convulsions, continued the Maid. Better yet, said the Consult. But alas, in spite of the Doctor's *better* and *better*, the Lady grew *worse* and *worse*. A new Courier put a Stop to Inquiry, and summon'd the *Juncto* to the Lady's Chamber: She lies in Extremity, a Subject of Compassion and Admiration; the *Emetic* put her upon the Rack, yet her Patience was stronger than the Pain. She seem'd almost to out-brave those primitive Martyrs, who neither flinched in the Fire, nor cried Oh! at the Torment of Knives and Razors; and though her Force sunk every Moment, her Resignation to Providence was invincible.

One Doctor was for Bleeding, another for Caustics, a third for he knew not what, and a fourth for sending her to the Waters; their Skill was nonplus'd, and they had already discharged their *Latin*, and poured out their Stock of Aphorisms: so that, in fine, they concluded *Nemine contradicente*, for a *Bolus* of *Opium*, that she might depart without Pain.

Eusebius bore all their impertinent Jargon; but when he heard this barbarous Resolution, he was not
Master

Master of his Resentment. What, said he, Gentlemen, do you believe another State? That an Eternity depends upon this last Moment? If you do, with what Conscience can you, in this fatal Circumstance, cast Reason into a Lethargy, when the poor Creature stands most in need of it? *You would, forsooth, put her out of Pain;* but your Pity is barbarous, and your Compassion cruel; for you deprive her of the very Power of asking God Forgiveness, and by Consequence of Pardon. Indeed the virtuous Tenure of her Life is in some measure an Assurance her Death will not be miserable; for it's rare to see a Person that has lived well, die ill: But however, it's a great Step taken in the Dark; a Trip is fatal, and an Oversight may pitch her on the wrong Side of the Shore, and then there is no Return. No, no, Gentlemen, if you can do her body no Good, you shall do her Soul no Harm. Few Moments remain, let her dispose of them to Advantage; let her die in Pain, to revive in never-ending Pleasures.

This short Harangue propagated the *Juncto*, and put an End to their Resolves: However, they took care of their Fee, but then left all Concern for the Lady behind them. The Ordinary staid not to cure, but to see her die. Indeed this was extraordinary; but Doctors, like Judges, pronounce the Sentence, but seldom are present at the Execution.

DIALOGUE VI.

Whether it be expedient for Gentlemen to travel; with some Directions to those who go abroad.

NEANDER's Father persuaded him to travel, before he settled in the World: He was of the common Persuasion that home-bred Gentlemen are only rough cast; that they must receive the last Strokes of Behaviour in *France* and *Italy*. But Neander, who rated the Persecutions of a Christian above all little Accomplishments of a Gentleman, and affected rather a Decency

gency of Manners, than of Carriage, would not consent to the Proposal, till he had consulted his Oracle *Eusebius*, and he resolved rather to follow his Judgment, than his own Inclination. He therefore gave him a Visit; the Father acquainted him of his Design, and asked his Advice.

My Son, said he, grows in Years fit for Improvement; he has Quality and Estate to support it. And besides, Nature has furnish'd him with a good Genius, and a sharp Wit, so that nothing is wanting to render him serviceable to his Country, and an Honour to his Family, but Experience. Now this cannot be well acquired but by traveling. He has indeed all the Learning the University can give him; but then to steer wholly by Books, without looking into Men and Business, is like learning a Trade without ever coming to the Practice: Who intends to be Master must draw by the Life, as well as copy from the Original, and join Speculation with Practice. My Relations are divided upon the Matter; some persuade me to send him abroad, others to keep him at home; some tell me home-breeding will ungentleman him, and others that foreign Education will turn his *English* Blood into *French* or *Italian*; favour me with your Opinion upon the Matter.

I am not, replied *Eusebius*, so fond of travelling as some of our Noblemen; nor yet so averse as others. A Man, no doubt, may reap great Improvement from the Tour of *France* and *Italy*, and also make the Journey to Disadvantage. He may rather glean up their Vices than their Virtues, and turn both a Clown and Debauchee. He may fall in love with their Wine, and their Women; and bring back nothing but a Wife, a Mistress, or a Disease, for a *Memorandum* of his Voyage. At least, I know some who left their Innocence and Money in the *Continent*, and landed at *Gravesend* with as light Heads, and lighter Pockets, than when they first set out at *Dover*. I confess this wandering Humour spreads wide, and grows epidemical: Men fancy foreign Air purifies the Brain, as well as the Lungs; that Breeding and Experience sprout up in the Streets

Streets of *Paris* and *Venice*; and that a View of *Verfeilles* and *Marli* transforms Rusticity into Behaviour. But alas, Sir, the *French* Climate breeds Clowns no less than our *English*; and I have seen there as ill-shaped Gentlemen, as at *London*. Our Carriage indeed has something of the Lion, and theirs of the Ape; ours awes, theirs delights; theirs is foolish, and our surly.

You have drawn, says the Gentleman, a disadvantageous Map of the Continent, and if Debauchery be the only Fruit of Travels, I think we may buy that Commodity nearer home at less Charge and Labour. For Vice thrives to Admiration in our Soil; and we have transplanted it these ten Years into *Flanders*, *Germany*, and *Spain*; and, what is strange, our Stock is not sunk; nay, it rather rises every Day; and though often Men of other Trades slip aside, we hear no Debauchees turn Bankrupt of their Vices. But, under favour, though other Nations have their Defects, they are not quite bare of Perfections. They may set us Patterns for Imitation, as well as for Aversion; and by consequence, improve a young Gentleman, as well as corrupt him. Every Country produces Remedies as well as Poisons, and he deserves to die who leaves those for these.

No doubt, replied *Eusebius*, there are fine things beyond Sea, and a young Man may waft over a handsome Cargo of *Italian* Improvements, with a Valize of *French* Behaviour. But alas, Sir, they will lie upon his Hands, and rust in his Wardrobe for want of using. We hate the stiff and gumm'd Deportment of the *Italian*, and to be yoked in Ceremony, or tied up to Steps in Conversation. And the *French* Shrug only sits tolerably on a *Beau*, and intitles him to the Honour of a *Fop*.

But, Sir, answer'd the Gentleman, Breeding consists not merely in a genteel Carriage, and Decency of Gesture; it reaches to the Improvement of the Understanding. I look upon a Man whose only Ornaments hang upon the Surface, like those Palaces that are stately without, and unfurnish'd within. Now Traveling matures the Understanding; it affords Knowledge and
Discovery,

Discovery, it enlarges the Faculty, and gives a more extensive Insight into Things and Men: Whereas a home-bred Gentleman is confined to narrow Limits; he wants materials for Observation, and cannot work out a Subject for a genteel Discourse.

Besides, Sir, he learns the great Mystery of foreign Governments; their *Fort* and their *Foible*, the Interests of Princes, and their Designs: And thus at the same time he seasons Pleasure with Profit; he stages (if I may say so) into Politics, and rides Post into Business: He returns equipp'd for Employment, and rigg'd out for an Embassy at least, to the *Cantons* or *Hans-Towns*.

Oh, Sir, said *Eusebius*, you send, I perceive your Son abroad to catch Politics. You should remember, we flush at home that Game in every Tipling-house: It over-runs both Town and Country, and is sunk from an Imbellishment into a Nuisance. Our Coblers and Tinkers take into their Consideration the *ardua regni negotia*, as well as our Parliament; and leave Holes in Shoes and Pans to mend the Government. I tell you, Sir, our Soil produces more Politics than all *Europe* besides; so that to transport foreign is to send *Owls to Athens*. We are, in a Word, pester'd with those of our own Growth, and I believe a Prohibition to ship over extern Politics into *England* might prove no less beneficial to the Nation, than that of bringing over *French Wines*, or planting Tobacco.

But, Sir, supposing our Gentleman arrived at *Paris* or *Venice*, what Company must he ply for those mighty Advantages you speak of? In one Place, without doubt, the topping Minister of State; in the other, the Counsel *di Dieci*. Certainly in such Schools he may in a short time run through a Course of Politics, and commence Doctor of State-tricks. But do you think those *Achitophels* will unveil the secret Mysteries of their Masters to Strangers, and throw before them the *Arcana* of the Cabinet? No, no, Sir, he must be content with Town-Intelligence, or the Table-reports of Treating-houses; and then you may guess with what a Provision of Politics, with what a Lading of Science he is like to freight the Packet-boat at his Return. I
counsel

counsel you rather to furnish your Son with *Gazettes*, *Mercuries*, and *Clefs de Cabinets*. Here he may catch Language and Knowledge at the same Draught, and polish his Tongue and his Brain together. I assure you, Sir, I knew a Gentleman, who bid fair for the Repute of a great Man, and an able Minister: He topp'd the Gravity of *Don Frederick de Toledo*; his Air was as mysterious as his Discourse; like the *Pagan Oracles*, he affected *Riddle* and *Inuendo's*. One would have taken him for the *Grand Vizier-General of Europe*, the common Manager of Treaties, and sole Depository of all the Cabinet Resolutions. Yet he owed all his Intelligence to *Holland News Books*; and when the Wind blew from our Shore in the *Brill Packet-boat's Teeth*, he was at a Loss for a Discourse. One would have sworn a North-west Gale had work'd upon his Brain, and blown his Wit and his Memory into *Norway* or *Denmark*.

But, Sir, do you fancy a Gentleman at his Arrival at *Paris* sends *Hue and Cry* after a Master of Politics? No, no, this is point-blank against Custom and Precedent. His Business is to oblige Sense, not to cultivate the Understanding; he first regales his Eye with a View of *Verseilles* and *Marli*, and then his Appetite with all the Delicacies of the Town. Though he brought from home the bare Title of *'Squire*, the *Parisians* will present him a Patent of Peerage, and the Noise of a *Jeune my Lord* will halloo into his Attendance all the *Breteurs* and *Sharppers* of the Town. And when once he is fallen into such Hands, he will scarce get out of them, till he has delivered his Purse, and pawn'd his Conscience. Believe me, Sir, a young Man that has Pleasure in View, will be shrewdly tempted to taste whether they be as agreeable to the Palate as to the Sight, and charm the Sense as much as the Imagination; and it's odds he will never stand firm against the Temptations: For *Flesh and Blood*, accompanied by Youth, have a strong Tendency to Evil; they plead hard for Liberty, and as eagerly against Constraint. And when a Youth lies at the Mercy of such Tutors, what can be expected but Debauchery? He will, in a Word, first break through
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the Practice, and then through the very Principles of Morality. Besides, he is out of a Parent's Sight; he is not awed by his Presence, nor within the Reach of his Correction: So that he ranges without Restraint, and plays the Prodigal without Controul.

Under favour, said the Gentleman, you suppose me little read in the Extravagancies of Youth, when you fancy I will lay the Reins on my Son's Neck, and abandon him to his own Conduct. Though, God be thanked, his Behaviour be regular and untainted, his Innocence may be surpris'd. Youth has a natural Tendency to Lewdness; it wants Experience to wave Temptation, and Resolution to encounter it. In fine, Passion and Carelessness throws it off its Guard, and lays it open to Surprize. Now to obviate this Inconvenience, I have provided him a sober Governor, who knows Things and Men; who has seen the World, and makes no inconsiderable Figure: He is a Man of Parts, talks well, and I hope lives better. Such a Person is able to stop the Sallies of Youth, to awe it into the Bounds of Decency by his Authority, and to instruct it by his Prudence.

This Caution, answer'd *Eusebius*, is laudable and prudent; but I assure you, Sir, it seldom answers Expectation: I have known Governors who wanted Governors themselves, and were ten times more fit to receive than to give Instruction. Their Religion was as loose as their Manners; they believed any thing for Interest, and practis'd any thing for Pleasure. Now when the Governor is dissolute, who can expect Regularity from the Pupil? But suppose him clear of these Imputations, it's still a Question whether the young Man either respects or esteems him: If not, it's odds his Instructions will make no Impression. They may beat the Ear, but will never touch the Heart. He may as well chastise the Wind as that Spark into Sobriety who disesteems his Person. The Man reinforces the Counsel, and persuades more oftentimes than his Reasons.

But farther, a young Man past Twenty is a resty Creature, his Passions are at their full Growth, and consequently

sequently ungovernable. They contend hard for Liberty, and it's ten to one Pleasure will get the better of Precept: For in that Age Sense affects more than Duty; and the agreeable enchants more powerfully than the lawful. When the Law declares him *Major*, he will not easily submit to the Slavery of Minority, *i. e.* he will not be rid by Governors, nor led by Pedants, like Children, by their Hanging-sleeves. He supposes he can walk by himself, and stand upon his own Legs; and thus becomes so unruly, that he will neither lead nor drive. What a fine *Ménage* did I see at *Paris* between a Tutor and his Pupil; they lived in a State of War; the one camped in the *Fauberg St. Germain*, the other in the *Rue de Temple*; and had not the *Seine* run between, they might have come to Action; at last they agreed upon a Treaty: But before it was brought to a Conclusion, as many Couriers run between them as from *Gertrudenburg* to the *Hague* or *Verfeilles*.

I am sensible, said the Gentleman, these Inconveniences happen; and when a Pupil undervalues the Person of his Governor, he seldom approves his Counsel: For it goes against the Grain to conform to the Advice of those we contemn. Besides, we presume Reasons cannot rise above the level of those that propose them: So that when we entertain a low Opinion of a Person, we disable his Friendship, and put him under an Impossibility of doing us any good. For this Reason I have pitched upon a *French* Minister; his Parts will call for Esteem, and his Character for Respect.

Upon a *French* Minister, replied *Eusebius*, what do you mean? Are our own Countrymen so destitute of Prudence, Good-nature and Probity, that you could not fall upon one completely furnished for the Employment? Good God! My Lady's Woman must be *French*, as well as my Lord's *Valet de Chambre*; we cannot eat, unless *French* Cooks serve us up Ragouts, nor dress but *a la-mode de France*. We hate the Nation, yet cannot live without the Natives. They screw themselves into the chief Families, and engross both Places of Trust and Profit, so that their Punishment has proved

proved a Favour. For they enjoy abroad more Plenty, than they durst have expected at home. Who can reconcile this Conduct to our Clamours? Who will not think we rail in jest, when we thus carefs in earnest? And that our Hearts are *French*, as well as our Cloaths?

We complain the Church of *England* is over-run with Fanaticism, that the *Presbyterians* over-top it in Number and Quality; what wonder when *French* Ministers train up the Nobility? Their Religion is *Puritan*, thrice refined; their Zeal has more Heat than Light, and more Peevishness than Charity. How often have they in *France*, made room for their Religion with the Sword, and bought Liberty of Conscience by Slaughter and Devastations? They are *Republicans* in Principles and Practice, and seldom obey when its in their Power to command.

Now is it likely these Gentlemen will train up their Pupils in the Obedience to the Church? No, no, I would as soon send a Youth to learn Christianity of the *Musti*, as the Doctrine of the Church of *England* of these *Monsieurs*. They hate the very Constitution of its Government, and long since pronounced its Ceremonies foolish and impious. Let us then cease to wonder, the Nobility strikes off from the Church to Conventicles: *French* Ministers have brought Apostacy into fashion, and raised the Spirit of Faction in *England*, as well as in *France*; and I fear the Infection will dilate, so long as they wind themselves into Ecclesiastical Benefices, and govern the Children of the Nobility.

But waving a *French* Minister's Religion, I am not thoroughly persuaded of his other Abilities. I fear he will rather consult his own Interest, than his Pupil's Improvement, and husband the Occasion to his own Advantage. For those Gentlemen settle not among us to spend, but to gain; to supply present Necessities, and to lay in Provisions against Age and Accidents. Now a Man that has Preferment in View, and a Fortune in his Head, will probably take the shortest way to his Journey's End. A generous Freedom, he knows, as the World goes, is no thriving Quality; wholesome Advice,
if

if unpalatable, revolts the Stomach, and alienates the Affection ; that those, who countenance Vice, are better paid, than those that preach up Virtue. This is a strong Temptation to the Governor to slacken the Reins, to endear the young Gentleman to him by all the little Tricks of Condescendence and Flattery ; and then the Pupil commands, and the Governor says *Amen* to all his Extravagances.

It's true, he betrays his Trust ; but alas, Sir, Traitors are no Phœnixes in our Age. However, he is true to his Interest ; and I find few solicitous of others Concerns if their own Work goes on kindly. He may indeed fear a Reprimand from the Father ; but then he hopes a Fortune from the Son ; and, believe me, good Coin affects more than hard Words. You know, Sir, Men are more prone to adore the rising than the setting Sun, and to fawn on those who enter upon an Estate, those who resign it.

You are then I perceive, said the Gentleman, no admirer of Travelling : You are for breathing our native Air, and growing grey under our own Elevation.

I say not so neither, answer'd *Eusebius*. I am not absolutely for it, nor universally against it. Travel may improve some, and ruin others. They may fit some for the highest Employments, and render others unworthy of the lowest. I think it convenient for the prime Nobility to take a walk into the Neighbouring Kingdoms ; for such are mark'd out for public Business ; they are, as it were, by Birth fixed in Court, and may pretend to a Place at the Council-Table, and to sit at the upper End of the Government. Now People in such Circumstances should lay in a competent Stock of *French* and *Dutch*, that they may treat in Person, not by Proxy and Interpreters. For Business goes on slowly when carried on by Deputy, and Ministers seldom agree when one understands not the other. It's proper for them to make some Acquaintance with Pensionary *Heinsius*, and Monsieur de *Torcy*, before they go over with a Character and Credentials. For the Quality of a Friend may hasten the Dispatches of the Minister ;
and

and the Capacity of the one forward the Work of the other.

But then, I think, Gentlemen of a lower Rank should not always be upon the Ramble; especially those who raise not their Pretensions to Court-Offices, but confine their Ambition to the Dignity of a Country-Justice, or look no higher than the Place of a Deputy-Lieutenant: In fine, those who are cut out for the Country, and design to spend their Time and their Money among their Neighbours.

First, Because foreign Breeding is not *a-la-mode* out of Town. It's too fine complexioned for a Village, and as useless as a Coach and Six in the Mountains of *Glamorganshire*. He will scarce meet an Occasion once in a Twelve-month, to practise *French* or *Italian*; and a Country-Dance well perform'd will receive more Applause than a *French Minuet*, *Saraband*, or *Rigadoon*. Besides, our Country Air will tarnish the Lustre of outlandish Behaviour: Time and Conversation will wash off the Varnish, and then *Aristotle's* Aphorism, *corruptio optimi fit pessima*, will have place; the best Manners degenerate into the worst, and the finest Gentleman makes the most compleat Clown. For what can be more antic, than Rusticity cut on Breeding? Methinks it resembles Canvas laid on Sattin, or Embroidery on Linsey-woolsey.

Secondly, A Gentleman train'd up in the sensual Freedoms of *Venice*, and the gaudy Pageantry of *Paris* will return with a Surfeit of a Country Life. He will regard his Home as a Banishment, and his own House as a Dungeon. An *Italian* Symphony strikes the Organ more smoothly than that of a Pack of Hounds. Comedies, Opera's, and public *Entrado's* of Princes and Embassadors draw more pleasing Prospectives in the Eye, than those of Dunghills or Cabanes. Gay Company affects more than Solitude; and Balls set off with all the glittering Gaudy of Silk and Silver are far more transporting than *Country Wakes*.

Now

Now a Gentleman that returns overgrown with these Notions, bas'd with these Inclinations, will he relish the Campaign, and pen up his Person and Happiness in a Village? No, no, he will take up in Town; and only visit his *Mancir* to refresh his Lungs, or his Purse. Since the middle of the last Age, our Way of Living is no more *English*; like our Language, it's piec'd up of *French* and *Italian*; and to compleat the *Olio*, we have thrown into the Composition the Vices of *Holland* and *Germany*. The Nobility withdraws from the Country into Town: That noble Hospitality proper to our Nation is out of Use, and almost out of Memory, and those Largeesses that entertain'd the Poor, run into another Channel: Game sweeps away one Part, gaudy Equipages, or Misses the other. In the mean time the Provinces are drain'd of Men and Money. Some run to Town to spend Estates, and others to gain them. The antient Seats of the Nobility are let out to *Jack-Daws* and *Screech-Owls*, or tumble under the Weight of Time, and Cattle graze upon their Ruins; *Jam seges est ubi Troja fuit.*

We may date this Change from the Time Travelling became genteel, and Wandering *a-la-mode*. Foreign Commerce has brought in foreign Customs; and as conquer'd *Greece* and *Asia* overcame the *Roman* Virtue and Sobriety, so *France* and *Italy* have debauch'd ours.

However, I acknowledge a young Man may improve by Travelling, if Caution be used: For beyond Sea there are great Virtues, as well as great Vices, and Examples that deserve Imitation as well as Aversion. You may polish the Body and the Mind, better the Gentleman, and perfect the Christian.

I.

In the first Place, pitch upon a virtuous and prudent Governor. Youth is blind, and if it follows a blind Guide, their Journey will end in a Precipice, *ambo in foveam cadent.* A Man that overlooks his own Duty to God, will not put a Pupil in mind of his. Our Instructions

structions and Practice are generally of a piece ; and if this be tainted, those are seldom sound.

II.

Let him be prudent, neither too indulgent on the one hand, nor too severe on the other. It's no less dangerous to keep too heavy a Hand over a Gentleman, than too light ; and to baulk all his Desires, than none. A Governor may lose his Authority by too much Stiffness, as well as by too much Condescendence. And if he commands with Haughtiness, he will certainly be disobey'd. To refuse a young Man a just Liberty is a Temptation to take it, and if once the Ice is broken, he will shake off Dependence, and discard Respect.

III.

I would not have a great Fault pass without a suitable Correction, nor a small one punish'd beyond Proportion : For if the Reprimands are equal, the young Man will fancy the Faults are also, and then he will conclude it's better to be teaz'd for something, than to be rated for nothing. When we draw near one-and-twenty, Severity is out of Season ; we may be led indeed into our Duty by Kindness, but hardly hector'd into it by Roughness. A Governor may maintain his Character, if he pretends only to advise, but will certainly forfeit it, if he presumes to command with Empire and Superciliousness : And therefore I would rather have him wait upon his Pupil as a Companion, than as a Spy and a Censor ; and ply him more with Counsel than Authority. We often yield frankly to the one, and always with Repugnance to the other.

IV.

Let him not stay too long in a great City ; when he has view'd what is worth Observation, let him pursue his Journey. A long Stay breeds Acquaintance, and Acquaintance exposes to Debauchery. A Man that knows no Body, will have no Temptation to tempt another to Ill, and is out of the Danger of being tempted ; for who will set up an *Incognito* ? Familiarity goes before

fore criminal Assignations ; and Privacy planes the Way for Extravagance.

V.

There is not perchance, a City in the World better stock'd with Men of Parts and polite Behaviour than *Paris* ; and none more easy and sociable to Strangers. A young Man may improve by such Conversation : He may enlarge his Understanding, and open to himself a more extensive Prospect than by Study and Application : And thus he will enter into a handsome Provision of Sense, not only without Trouble, but even with Delight : He will raise a Fortune in Knowledge, without the Drudgery of Study, and transplant another's Science into his own Skill.

VI.

But then if he may better himself by the Company of Men, he will certainly expose himself to a thousand Dangers. If he frequents the Conversation of Women, their Language charms, their Expressions insinuate, and their Air is imposing ; so that at the same Time they attack the Understanding and Will, and conquer both almost without Resistance. How many have I known of our Nation fascinated by these *Sirens*, enchanted by these *Circes*. They stole away their Hearts and their Heads ; empty'd their Brain and their Purse, and compleatly equip'd 'em for a Mad-house, or an Hospital. The Passion was too strong for Precept, and the Oratory of the Ladies baffled the Counsel of Governors. For Love is without Ears, as well as without Eyes, and, what is worse, without Understanding. It's true, we send our Children abroad to learn *French* Courtship, as well as Modes ; but this Errand is as unchristian as unnecessary. We carry the Principles of this Science within us, and Nature alone will teach it at Home without the Assistance of outlandish Preceptors. Too great a Proficiency in the Art is rather to be fear'd than Ignorance ; and it's ten to one, that in spite of Caution young Men will improve it some Years too soon, than a Moment too late. And this is
the

the Reason some leave their Hearts and their Conscience in *France* and *Italy*; and others return with a poor Wife, and some with an impudent Courtizan.

VII.

I would not have a Gentleman square his Observation by Dr. *Lyfter's Memoirs of Paris*; they are below Remark, and sit better on an *Ignoramus*, than on a Fellow of the *Royal Society*, or a *Gentleman*. Let him not therefore trifle away his Time in examining whether *Asparagus* tastes sweeter in *April* or *January*; or the *Roman Lettuces* better than our *Selebian*, or the *Fiacres* more conveniently hung than my Lord Ambassador's Coach; let him not trot about to view rare Collections of Cockle-shells, or Skeletons, or Todpoles and Spiders: For after all, these Discoveries are not worth the Candle; nay, within an Ace as ridiculous as *Caligula's* Journey to the Sea-shore to load his Army with this childish Trumpery. *Lassel's* Voyage will be far more useful than *Lyfter's*; it will furnish matter for Inquiry and Observation, and both delight and instruct in your Journey. Here is a short Draught of the Advantages and Disadvantages of Travelling; I have given you my Judgment of the Matter, and leave to your Prudence the Determination.

I am infinitely oblig'd, said the Gentleman, for your Advice and Freedom; and am persuaded young Men must not be sent abroad without Care and Caution. I will take the most just Measures Prudence can suggest, to keep my Son within the Bounds of Duty. I am wholly of your Opinion, that Virtue is the most accomplished Ornament of a Gentleman, that this alone renders him amiable in this World, and happy in the next.

DIALOGUE VII.

Of the Soul's Immortality.

Eusebius was invited in *Christmas* by a Gentleman to an Entertainment. He found a great deal of Company, who were resolv'd to be merry; there were some sober Gentlemen among them; but then others were of the Town cut, *Young G—damme's*, that spoke ill, and liv'd worse. They had plac'd their *Requiem* in this World, and turn'd off all Thoughts of the other; and when Claret had warm'd the Head, Impiety broke out at the Tongue; their Heart sat upon their Lips, and discover'd to the Company the Corruption that lurk'd within, and one might read the Secrets of their Souls in their Words. Some were for the *High-Church*, others for the *Low*, and most for no Church. Their Faith was Faction and Interest, and Passion the sole Motives of Credibility.

A grave Gentleman thought it his Duty to rebuke the Insolence of the daring *Salomoneans*: Gentlemen, said he, this Discourse neither suits with your Company, nor your Profession: It makes the very Soul of a Christian shrink back, and leaves Nature in a kind of Chill. If you take the Liberty to blaspheme God, and play upon Religion, I must take the Freedom to defend both; to desire you to leave the Subject, or the Room. For to be short, these Sallies breed Disgust, they are Penance and Mortification to the Company. God will call you to Account one Day; and if he winks at your Impieties in this World, he will punish them in the other.

One of the Blades (whom I call *Athymius*) received the Correction with a Smile. If God, says he, vouchsafes to let me run my Course smoothly in this World, I will venture his Anger in the next. For to be plain, I am of Mr. *Dryden's* Opinion; *Our Minds are perpetually wrought on by the Temperament of our Bodies, which makes me suspect they are nearer allied, than either our Philosophers or School Divines will allow them to be.*

That is, reply'd the Gentleman, our Soul is indistinct from the Body : Or in plain *English*, nothing but a Heap of organized Matter. This is a fine Scheme : The System *a-la-mode*, raked out of the Ashes of *Hobbs* and *Pomponatius*, and squared for the Latitude of Libertinism ; that *post Mortem nulla Voluptas*, removes, rubs, and planes the Way of Liber ; for when the Prospect of another Life is shut up, Men may sport without Restraint, and play without Remorse ; but this is to pretend to Wit, to con the Poets.

Sir, said *Athymius*, less of Exclamation, if you please, and more of Reason : Heat must not decide the Question, but Argument. I am not for implicit Faith, nor over-resigning to Authority ; my way is to examine before I assent, and to preserve Reason in its just Liberties : Absolute Submission keeps us in a kind of Minority ; it palls the Understanding, and exposes us to Imposture : Always to walk on Crutches is the way to lose the Use of our Limbs, and to steer by another's Reason, to forfeit the Benefit of our own.

Reason, answer'd *Eusebius*, is an excellent thing ; but those who bear the Charter by which they enjoy it, seem not over-fond of the Possession ; if your Soul be material, what becomes of this topping Prerogative ? Man must draw in his Figure, and herd with Beasts : At most there will be no more Difference between them than between a *Fox* and a *Beetle*, or *Scotch Cloth* and *Fine Holland* ; the Materials are the same, the Distinction lies in the Fineness of the Contexture.

I confess, reply'd *Athymius*, I should esteem myself happy were I unprovided of Reasons that demonstrate myself less than popular Errors make me ; for after all, to turn Advocate against one's self, to plead against our greatest Prerogative, and dispute one's self out of a Possibility of being happy in the next World, is the greatest Misfortune that can befall a Man in this, but Truth must have place. I love to know my just Dimensions, and as I scorn to resign the least Perfection that belongs to my Nature, so I will never usurp those that are foreign ; I'll not grow great by Flattery, nor claim a Dignity supported by Ignorance and Vi-
sion

sion. If you can prove by Dint of Reason my Soul is immortal, I'll submit to Demonstration ; and you shall see by my Conduct I expect Heaven as the Remercence of Virtue, and fear Hell as the Punishment of Vice.

Under Favour, said *Eusebius*, methinks your Opinion calls louder for Demonstration than mine ; for if it prove false, you forfeit Heaven for the Mistake, and must groan under all the Thorns of the Damned into the Bargain ; whereas I shall go off with the Satisfaction of living like a Man, tho' I die like a Beast. And tho' I am not happy in the next World, I shall be out of the reach of Misery. In fine, I bid fair for Heaven, tho' I fall short of my Pretensions. But however, seeing you put me upon the Proof, I'll condescend to your Desire ; yet though you promise to submit to Evidence, I cannot be satisfied of the Performance.

I suppose, Sir, you will take the Word of a Gentleman, reply'd *Athymius*.

The Word of a Gentleman, answered *Eusebius*, made of Soul and Body, goes as far with me as a Bond, but your Matter and Motion Gentlemens Credit sinks low in my Esteem ; for look ye, Sir, any little Accident from without may ruffle your present Situation, and jumble you into a new Set of Resolutions ; it may flush a new Train of Thoughts, and then adieu to the old : For Matter and Motions are bizarr Things, humour-some and capricious to Excess ; they are arbitrary and uncontroll'd ; you must will and nill as they please ; every new Impulse flings a new Figure, and wears off the old ; so that you are guided by Fate, and drove on by Chance in your System, and consequently must be an Infidel, or a true Believer, an honest Man, or a Knave, in spite of your Teeth. Now I can no more trust such a Man than a Puppet : I will not venture a Cross upon his Honour, nor hazard a single Six-pence upon his Reputation ; for who is not Master of himself, can be no Slave to his Word.

But for all that, said *Athymius*, my Word will go a great Way, and my Neighbours look upon it as good a Security as a Mortgage.

I believe you, answer'd *Eusebius* ; but this is an Instance that those Neighbours are perswaded your Soul is something more than Matter, when they take your Word, nay, and yourself too when you give it ; for who but Fools will trust a Man that is moved by Chance, that is push'd on by Fate, and drawn by Necessity : Thus you see, Sir, you disavow your Tenet when you act like a Man, which makes me suspect you only abet it, when you intend to play the Beast, and that your Disease lies more in the Heart than the Head.

If you please, said *Athymius*, cut short and come to the Point ; Preambles take up Time, and rid no Ground ; but pray let us not steer within sight of Metaphysics, nor fall to capping of Syllogisms. I am for plain Reason without *Fard* or *Fucus*, and it works more kindly in honest *English*, than in the barbarous *Ergotism* of the Schools.

I am for you, reply'd *Eusebius*, and you shall hear those Arguments that are more easily understood than confuted. Tell me then, is it better to be a Beast or a Man ?

I perceive, answer'd *Athymius*, you are fallen into a fit of bantering ; the Question is scandalous, and the very Comparison is degrading to human Nature ; he who prefers a Beast to Man, deserves to be thrown among them.

DIALOGUE VIII.

If the Soul be mortal, it's better to be a Beast than a Man.

Euseb. **Y**OUR Answer is most true, but then your Tenet is no less false ; give Attention to the Proof ; nothing falls under Choice but Good, and without doubt a greater Good is preferable to a less : Now Good and Happiness are synonymous, therefore a greater Happiness is preferable to a less. Our present Dispute falls therefore within this Compass ; whether a Beast in your Scheme of the Soul's Mortality be more happy than a Man ? I contend it is, and prove it thus.

It's

It's evident the Bodies of Beasts are more robust than those of Men, they are neither so sensible of Heat nor Cold ; their Constitutions vary not with the Seasons, nor change with the Barometer. Hence may Diseases spare them, that assail us ; they apprehend not their Pains before they come, nor remember them when past ; they only groan under the present, and so their Dolors are momentary.

Besides, their Pleasures are more affecting than ours, and their Enjoyments more pure ; they are purchased without Care, and lost without Trouble ; they are neither followed with Remorse, nor waited on by Repentance ; they are not clap'd on the Rack by Jealousy, nor haunted by the Fury of Ambition ; they are too content to hope, and not miserable enough to fear ; they know no more what it is to be greater than to be less, and therefore take no Measures to conserve Fortune, or to better it.

But poor Man lies open to the Assaults of a thousand Calamities that overlook Beasts ; his Body is an Hospital-General of all Diseases, and he entertains them at the Expence of his Ease, and, in the End, of his Life too : But the Diseases of his Mind are more numerous and more tormenting ; Hope drives one way, Despair another ; Solicitude discomposes the Head, Jealousy the Heart ; Envy qualms on his Bowels, Prodigality on his Purse ; he keeps no Mean either in Prosperity or Adversity ; that draws his Reason, this oversets his Patience ; he is insolent in one State, abject in the other ; and that his Misfortunes may be without Remedy as well as without Bounds, he calls back past Miscarriages to torment himself again, and conjures up the Ghosts of his departed Pleasures to transform them into Furies ; and when he can discover in the future no real Objects of Disgusts, his Imagination creates them. He springs Chimeras, and trembles at Monsters that have no Being but in Fancy ; yet though they are fictitious, his Fears are real, and by consequence his Misery.

Indeed he is not without Pleasures, because not without Sense ; but then they are season'd with so many bitter Ingredients, that they rather disgust than delight.

What shall I say of those brutish Transports of Lewdness, that hate the Sun, and range about in Shades and Obscurity? Of those Obscenities that make up here the *Mahometical* Elysium of Libertines, and in good time will throw them into the real Hell of the Christians. In this Point the Advantage stands for the Beasts; their Passion is as keen, their Sense as acute as Man's; and, by consequence, their Sensation as affecting; but then their Pleasure is not dash'd with Shame, nor bought at the Expence of Honour or Conscience; they contrive no Plots to steal Satisfaction, no Intrigues to conceal it; it ends without Regret, without Remorse, and never stabs at parting. But Fear always succeeds Man's criminal Pleasures, and even the Atheist that laughs at Hell, is at the same time forc'd to tremble at it. If therefore the Pleasures of Beasts are at least equal, and Troubles less, we may justly conclude, even in this Point, they are more happy.

It's true, neither Beasts nor Men have found a *Recipe* against Death, but then they march off without Concern, and receive the Blow without Reluctancy, because without Knowledge; but this parting Pang hangs cruelly in our Heads, and sometimes dies them grey before the Age of Twenty. For after all, it's an unpleasant Reflection, that we must sink into a State of Insignificancy, and become cumbersome to ourselves, and unacceptable to others; that we must grow less and less, and fall away by Inches. In fine, that though we nurse up continually the Decays of Nature, Death will be too hard for Doctors and Surgeons, and tear us from the Enjoyments of all those sensual Objects, in which we place our *Requiem*. So that I must conclude, that seeing Beasts, in your Supposition, are more happy than Men, it's better to be a Beast than a Man.

The Consequence is shameful, beyond Scandal, and a Man must be weary or ignorant of the Dignity of his Nature to admit it. What, does the Happiness of a Horse deserve Envy? Is the Punishment of *Nebuchadnezzar* become an Ornament to the whole Species? Such a Creature should be thrown below his Kind, and condemned to wander on the Mountains with Bears and Lions.

Atbym.

Atbym. You have held forth with much Emphasis upon the Happiness of Beasts, and Calamities of Man ; but you flag in your Inference : For who would chuse rather to be a Stone, than the most wretched Man that ever breathed ? Yet those brave Ages are out of reach of Fits of the Gout, and uncapable to receive uneasy Impressions.

Euseb. Were I sure my Soul was mortal, I should chuse rather to remain in a State of Nothing, than to be miserable ; for I can't understand why Being is better than not Being ; only because in one State we have agreeable Sensations, and none in the other ; and I declare that Existence without Pleasure here, or hereafter, is no Favour, and with Torment a Burthen ; and were I sure never to be pleased, I should wish myself into Nothing, and pray for Annihilation : For to maintain that a miserable Being is preferable to no Being, or no sensible Being, is the wildest Thesis that Folly can abet, and I believe the bravest Champions of this strange Paradox may be racked, or even bastinado'd out of the Error.

Atbym. Supposing Beasts equal Men in the Perception of agreeable Sensations, are less subject to unpleasing ones, yet they are void of Reason. This Advantage is proper to Man, and, I must tell you, one Grain of Science weighs more than a Tun of sensual Satisfaction ; this discovers the Beauty of Virtue, and the Deformity of Vice, and throws before the Will a thousand Reasons to embrace that, and hate this : A virtuous Man, tho' miserable, walks in a higher Sphere, than the most happy Beast. Who would not charge up to a Cannon's Mouth for a good Cause, and rather expose his Life than desert Justice ? I would rather give up my Body to a Tyrant, than betray a Friend, and die Innocent, than live a Traytor : It's worth coming into the Word to go virtuously out of it. A Man whose Virtue will bear the Trial of Pain, without shrinking upon the Torture, is more happy than a Debauchee upon the Throne. Suffering renders not a Man bad, or unhappy, but the Cause ; Reason pronounces the Tyrant miserable that murders Innocence,

not the Hero that dies for it. Seeing therefore Beasts are below those noble Qualities, Wisdom and Virtue, I must conclude, that the most wretched Man is more happy, than the most fortunate Beast ; and therefore it's better to be a Man than a Beast,

Euseb. You harangue upon the Excellence of Science like a Peripatetic, and huff upon Virtue like a Stoic : I never read *Seneca de contemnenda Morte*, but, methinks, I hear a Coach and Six rattle in the Street ; they both make a majestic Noise, and almost fright and please at the same Time.

Science, no doubt, is a fine Thing, and Virtue a better ; but if we suppose no future State, their Price must fall, and the Purchase of both will never pay the Charges of a hundred Objects that fall within the Sphere of our Knowledge ; few please us, many are indifferent, and most torment us. Is it so diverting an Entertainment to reflect, that Friends betray me, and Enemies persecute me ? That wise Men scorn, and Buffoons burlesque me ? Were we void of Knowledge, how should we languish under Hope, or fret under Desire ? How should we lie open to the Assaults of Fear, or groan under the Pangs of Despair ? It's certain, in your Scheme, this mighty Prerogative would rather deserve the Name of a Curse, than of a Blessing ; for though it made us greater, it would render us more unhappy.

Courage, Fidelity, and Virtue are great Advantages, even upon the Rack, in Supposition of the Soul's Immortality, and Innocence in Flames is preferable to Guilt in Power and Pleasure ; for this leads us to an eternal Misery, and those to everlasting Happiness ; for certainly, that Creature is far removed from a State of Happiness, that must account for a criminal Satisfaction in Fire and Brimstone ; and he deserves not the Name of miserable, who passes through a short-liv'd Martyrdom into a perpetual Refreshment.

But then, if our Souls sink into nothing, when our Bodies fall into the Grave, Vice has all the Advantage over Virtue ; for that brings present Pleasure, this Pain ; and then in the other World, the one fears no Punishment, and the other expects no Reward. So that neither

ther Knowledge, nor the Practice of Virtue, add a Grain of Happiness to Man, if his Soul be mortal.

But, why do we talk of Virtue? It's a Chimera in your Hypothesis; you destroy not only the Thing, but the very Powers of it. Can Choice spring from Fate, or Virtue from Necessity; how can we be Masters of our Actions, when we are not of our Souls? And if these are nothing but a Mixture of Matter and Motion, where is Liberty to act or not act, and by consequence Virtue? For who deserves Blame for what he could not avoid, or Praise for following the Impulse of Necessity.

Atbym. You may flourish on the Happiness of Beasts, and the Miseries of Man, till Doom's-day, but you will never persuade me to truck Nature with an Ass.

Euseb. For all that, Sir, Men of your Principles generally make good Progress in the Art of Transformation. I knew some at Twenty, that became Centaurs, half Beasts, half Man. Reason declared them Men, the Abuses of it Asses; Intemperance Swine, and Lewdness Goats or Baboons.

Atbym. Reason ends when Raillery begins. You have drain'd the Subject, for I perceive Sense runs low, let us start another Argument.

The Second Proof.

Euseb. If Man's Soul be mortal, his *summum bonum* must consist in the Pleasures of the Body, in the Satisfaction of the Senses: For seeing his Nature is wholly material, like that of Beasts, his End cannot be different. Whence it follows, that as Man's Happiness and Perfection rise with his Brutality; and that he sits in the Height of his Greatness, when he appears as little as Lewdness can make him: The Reason is, because every thing is in the full State of its Perfection, when united to its last End; then its Capacities are filled, and this Society lays asleep both the Unquietness of Desire, and the tormenting Impressions of Hope or Fear. If therefore the Pleasures of Sense are Man's ultimate Happiness, the more he indulges,

the more happy he is, and more perfect. Wherefore our King and Parliament should call in all those Laws, that discountenance Vice, and fine Lewdness. It was an Act of Injustice to make 'em, and is of Cruelty to execute 'em; they scare Men from their Duty, and fright them from their *summum bonum*; they stigmatize those Actions with Shame that deserve Applause, and canonize Sobriety and Self-denial, with such as call for Infamy; for certainly it's laudable to prosecute our last End with the utmost Care and Diligence; for this we came into the World; the Pursuit of it is our Duty, and it's Profession the Top of our Felicity; therefore Rapes, Adulteries, Incests, and all those Pleasures that smooth the Organ, and oblige the Body, are exempt from Prohibition; they have nothing ill but what is thrown on 'em by Prejudice, Education, and Mistake.

But this is not all, for Reason tells me, my sovereign Good is preferable to all others, and that I may comply with any Means to purchase it: If therefore it be placed in the sensual Operations of this Life, to conserve it, I may swear *pro* and *con*, blaspheme God's Goodness, and abjure his Being. I may sheer off from one Religion to another, profess all, and believe none, to fence against Death. Must not that Doctrine be monstrous it itself, that is so flamingly impious in its Consequences? It's a Spawn of Hell; I wonder it infects not the Air, and turns all into Plague and Poison.

Athym. Under Favour, these Inferences flow from Mistake, not from the Mortality of the Soul.

Euseb. From Mistake! if the Soul be material, must not its supreme Felicity consist in the Fruition of some temporal, some sensual Object?

Athym. Some Philosophers are of this Opinion.

Euseb. It is therefore lawful to postpone any inferior Good to the supreme, to hazard all Accessaries, to ensure the Principal.

Athym. What then?

Euseb. Why, I may at any rate conserve Life, if in Danger; for this is the Basis, the Foundation of Happi-

Happiness ; so that if a Tyrant commands me to deny God, with a Pistol in one Hand, and a Sword in the other, I may comply without Offence to my Maker, or Scandal to my Neighbour ; and then your Crimes *minorum gentium*, upon the same Account, must stand for Virtue.

Athym. You misrepresent my Doctrine, and expose it in so monstrous a Dress, to halloo in the Rabble upon me. I tell you therefore once more, 'tis more noble to die a Man, than to live an Impostor : For, as I said, Man's ultimate Felicity consists in the Practice of Virtue, and his Misery in the Exercise of Vice : Now in the forementioned Circumstances, we must give up our Carcass to Fire and Faggot, rather than secure it by a Crime ; for of two Evils, Reason tells me, I must chuse the least ; now it's a less to resign Life, than to forfeit our Happiness, that consists in Virtue, by Thefts, Murthers, or Adulteries.

Euseb. No more of Virtue as you love Sense ; in your Scheme, it's nothing but Sound and Vision.

Athym. Though the Soul be mortal, some Actions may, I presume, conform to the Dictates of right Reason, and others deform.

Euseb. To the Dictates of Divine Reason, but not to Man's ; for Reason in your Hypothesis must be filed off the List of our Prerogatives : This glorious Quality sinks into bare Instinct, and nothing clashes with any innate Principle that obliges Sense.

Besides, though some Actions were deform, and others conform to right Reason ; yet those could not be worthy of Blame, nor these of Praise, because an Agent compounded of Matter and Motion acts by Impulse and Necessity, and by Consequence can neither practise Virtue nor Vice.

But supposing him capable of Virtue, yet we shall find it a less Evil to desert Virtue, than to die in its Defence ; for if the Soul be mortal, Death is destitute of the very Appearance of Good ; it strips a Man not only of Happiness, but of the very Hope of retrieving the Misfortune, for it throws him into a State of Nothing. Now Sin, in your Theology, corrects

rects the Evil with some Grains of Good ; it preserves Life, the Basis of Happiness, and tho' it stops the Stream of Felicity you place in Virtue, it does not drain it ; he may rise after his Fall, and so recover his lost Happiness : Death therefore being the greatest Evil, he may purchase the Continuation of Life at the Expence of Honour, Honesty, and Conscience.

Athym. Death, for the Defence of Virtue, has nothing evil but Fancy ; bear off the ghastly Vizours, and you will discover nothing but Charms : Can Imagination frame a Sight more ravishing than a Hero that declares for Virtue on the Scaffold, that dares be honest in spite of Torments ? Such a noble Cause melts an expiring brave Soul into Transport and Ecstasy ; it oversets his Faculties with Pleasure, and drowns them in an Ocean of Delight : To soar above the common Impressions of Fear is a noble Flight, and to laugh in the Face of Torments, a beautifying Piece of Courage.

Euseb. For all that, you will give me leave to tell you, I admire more your Martyr's Stupidity, than his Bravery ; and I am apt to believe, he would resign you all his Pleasure, if you would take his Pain into the Bargain. But suppose he overflows with Delight in this critical Moment, he flashes into nothing the next. What Porportion therefore is there between the loss of Life that is eternal, and the Satisfaction of a Moment ? If therefore the Soul be mortal, Vice, with Pleasure, is preferable to Virtue without Reward, and by Consequence your Hero dies rather worthy of Pity than Applause ; because he chuses Death void of all Good, before Life the Basis of all Happiness, and so crosses manifestly upon that Statute, by which the present Controversy is tried. *Of two Evils the less is to be chosen.*

DIALOGUE IX.

If Man's Soul be mortal, he has no last End.

Athym. **T**HESE Arguments *ab absurdo*, are ill featured, they raise more Dust than Light, and rather puzzle than convince; give me a direct Proof that the Soul is immaterial, and I fling up the Cause.

Euseb. Absurdities are the Spawn of Falshood, not of Truth; and when the Sequel is absurd, the Thesis cannot be reasonable; if therefore a Consequence of the Soul's Mortality cut upon the known Truth, the Tenet itself must be erroneous. These Arguments then are well complexioned, and fit for the Post I assign them; they spring Evidence, and flush Conviction; Obstinacy may withstand them, but Reason cannot: However, give me leave to explain another Inference of your Opinion, and then I will come to those Proofs you call for.

Surely, you are not so great a Stranger to your own Desires, as not to feel an Inclination to be happy; this Passion is hereditary to the whole Species; it accompanies us in all Stations, and even to the Death-bed, when all other Appetites either sleep or expire, this grows more keen and ravenous: Now, why has Nature stamp'd on our Souls such a longing after Happiness? Why has it inflamed us with so fond a Passion, that we court it under a thousand Disguises? Why has it equip'd us for Conquest, if Victory be impossible? Certainly at our Creation, God never intended to treat us like *April Fools*, by sending us on Adventures that must end, not only in Disappointment, but Affliction.

All Philosophers take it for a *Postulatum*, that *Natura nil agit frustra*; if therefore Nature never acts in vain, the carking Desire of Happiness that haunts us from the Cradle to the Coffin, may be satiated by the Fruition of some Object. I say satiated, for Happiness cannot be compleat whilst we desire what we do not possess,

possess, or fear to be discarded of what we enjoy ; for Desire implies Want in the very Notion, and Fear a Possibility of Want, and both suppose Uneasiness and Dissatisfaction, and by Consequence exclude Felicity.

Now it's evident, that nothing in this World is able to satiate the Heart of Man, the Possession never answers Expectation ; the most promising Enjoyments languish upon Experience, and sleep upon the Senses ; we rowl from the Possession of one Object, to the Desire of another ; dissatisfied in all States, content in none. *Alexander* the Great could never put any Bounds to his Ambition, though he did to his Conquests ; his Desires widen'd with his Dominions, and when he had almost conquered one World, his Pride would have attempted the Conquest of a Thousand ; the prodigious Treasures of the *East* could not stop his Avarice ; his Wishes were as prodigal as his Largeesses : So that his Want ran higher than his Revenue, though he had ten Millions of Talents, he possess'd nothing, because he desired more ; his Pleasures of Sense kept pace with those of his Power ; yet, after all he was not happy, because dissatisfied.

Now if mighty Princes who walk on Crowns, and tread on Silver, who have Power to command Pleasures, and a Fund to support them, feel the Points of Thorns on Beds of Roses, the Pangs of Want in the Arms of Plenty, Crosses in Success, and Disappointment in their most fortunate Enterprizes, must we not pronounce them miserable in the very height of their Felicity ? And if it can be found neither in Empire, Riches, nor Sensuality, nor in all together, must we not conclude Man's *summum bonum* dwells in a superior Region ; and that we must leave this World before we can enter upon the Possession of it ?

In a word, the Desire of Happiness is ingrafted in our Nature, it may therefore be attained, because it's impossible Men should be born with a natural Tendency to a Chimera ; there is no meeting it in this World, therefore we must expect it in the other ; our Souls therefore survive our Bodies, and if for one Moment, they must remain eternally ; for without this perpetual

petual Duration there can be no Content, because no Security.

Athym. I own Philosophers have been at a Plunge to assign this *summum bonum* of Man : Some have seated it on the Pinnacle of Honour ; others have placed it in the Pleasures of the Body ; but the first is too thin, too airy, and too precarious to satiate a reasonable Soul ; and the second too brutal. I am inclined to fix it with *Aristotle*, in the Satisfaction of our most noble Faculty, that has no Dependence on Fortune, nor lies within the Reach of Casualties : Now it's agreed on all Sides, that nothing comes up to the Understanding, therefore our Felicity must consist in the Satisfaction of this glorious Faculty.

Euseb. But where shall we chop upon this beatifying Object ?

Athym. The stately Machine of the World will furnish us a large Prospect of Contemplation and Pleasures. I can never contemplate the Beauty of the Firmament, the fine Subordination of the celestial Orbs, their various yet regular Circumvolutions, but I find myself in Rapture and Extasy. Sometimes I dive into Causes, and construe *Virgil* by Experience, *Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas* : When my Understanding is posed, I step over the Difficulty, and am even charm'd with my Ignorance ; for a *nonplus* has its Satisfaction, and there is a Charm in knowing we are ignorant of something.

Euseb. This Contemplation is indeed a handsome Diversion, but a lean Felicity ; and I am apt to think it's far more capable to puzzle than to content ; for alas, we survey those Objects that are at hand through Mists, and those that are remote through false Prospectives : So that our Ignorance extends wider than our Knowledge, and our Intellect is rather harass'd with Doubts, and alarm'd with Suspensions, than regal'd with staunch Demonstration. Now I suppose Ignorance rather frets the Understanding than satiates it ; Doubts rack it, and Suspensions clap it on the Torture : How then can this fine Contemplation you talk of lay asleep all our Desires, and place us in a State of Repose ?

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But 2dly, If Hunger ravage my Stomach, and Penury my Purse; if I tug at an Oar, will Contemplation silence Appetite? or fill my Purse? or knock off my Chains? Alas, Sir, these Miseries sit hard upon a Man in spite of Speculation, and must be removed by some more effectual Means than Knowledge.

3dly, All the World cannot whip and spur for *Oxford* and *Cambridge*; some have no Wit for Studies, some no Inclination, and others no Leisure; Clowns find upon Experiment, that Action turns to better Account than Speculation, and you will never persuade them to truck the Spade for *Aristotle* or *Archimedes*.

Again, Women, I suppose, may lay some Claim to Happiness as well as Men; must they also leave the Distaff to con *Plato*, and contemplate Nature, whilst they should make Bone-lace? I always suppos'd the supreme Felicity of every Individual was the same with that of the whole Species; but no, it varies with Constitutions and Employments; and you treat the Sex in *England* with as little Ceremony as the *Bonzees* in *Japan*, who discard them of all Title to Happiness; but this is to postpone the Scripture to *Pomponatius*; to rely more on the Reveries of an atheistical Pedant, than on the Authority of JESUS CHRIST.

DIALOGUE X.

The Soul is immaterial.

Euseb. YOU called for direct Proofs of the Immateriality, I must comply with your Desire.

I.

Man is a free Agent, and by Consequence his Soul draws not its Origin from Matter. Sure you will not oblige me to prove a thing so clear, so evident. We experience this Liberty in our Actions; we may continue the present Discourse or interrupt it, I am not necessitated to speak, nor you to hear me. Upon this Persuasion

Persuasion of Freedom, Commerce is carried on, and Government founded: Who would trust a Neighbour, were he not persuaded Honesty were in his Power? And why should a Murtherer leave his Life on a Gibbet, if the Crime was unavoidable: In fine, why do all Commonwealths discourage Vice by Punishments, and encourage Virtue by Rewards, but upon this universal Persuasion that Man is a free Agent? This being premised, I argue thus.

Liberty is a Power to act and not act, when all things pre-required for Action are ready; for no Creature can be conceived free that is antecedently determined to one side of a Contradiction. Now if there be a Power in Man, that can suspend an Action, when all Things pre-required are present, its Action depends not upon any Disposition either in the Object or Organ; and by Consequence, it must be independent of Matter; but if the Action be independent, the Power itself must be so also; for no Operation can be more perfect than its Cause.

If you say the Will is not determined by itself, but by the Charms of some apparent Good, or some material Dispositions in or without the Organ, you overthrow the very Notion of Liberty; for then it can no more abstain from Action, than the Eye, when all things necessary for Vision are present. Seeing therefore Man is supposed free, and that Freedom is incompatible with a Determination that proceeds from any previous Disposition in Matter, yet we must conclude it determines itself, and by Consequence is independent of Matter, *i. e.* immaterial.

To expose this Truth in a greater Light, do we not sometimes mortify the Inclinations of Flesh, and hold in the Tendency of Appetite? How many tie up their Bodies to Chastity in spite of Solicitations? Suppress the Sallies of Intemperance by Abstinence, and of Drunkenness by Sobriety? Now if the Soul depends on the Body, it cannot baulk its Inclinations: Can a Horse restrain Appetite when he stands at a full Manger, and fast in the Presence of Provender? Alas, poor Creatures, their Souls and Bodies are made of the same Stuff;

Stuff; and so those have no Superiority, nor Jurisdiction over these: In all their Flights and Pursuits they follow the Direction of Sense; whatever glides smoothly upon the Organ, the Soul embraces, and whatever grates upon it raises its Aversion.

What material Disposition could force *St. Laurence* rather to broil on a Gridiron, than to apostatize from his Religion? They all banded against his Resolution; Sense persuaded him to relent, and his Body sunk under the Violence of Torments; yet his great Soul was deaf to the Clamours of Sense; it sacrificed the Body to conserve its Innocence. You may as soon persuade me that Ice can burn, and Fire freeze, as that a material Principle can thus act contrary to the Dispositions of Matter; but *St. Laurence* did, and thousands besides; therefore there is in Man a Principle that determines itself, and consequently independent of Matter.

II.

If the Soul be material, all Pleasure must be conveyed unto it by the Channel of some Sense; no agreeable Perception can come at it, but by the Mediation of corporeal Organs; but the Soul is capable of Delight, that has no Influence on Sense, that resides wholly in the Understanding; thus the Discovery of a Truth distracted *Archimedes*, and he demonstrated himself almost out of his Wits; he was not able to bear the Impression of Joy, but overset with the affecting Charms of his casual Discovery, he leap'd out of the Bath, and ran naked through the Streets, without any Regard to Age or Decency.

Now, what plunged this Mathematician's Soul into such an Ocean of Delight? Nothing but a new found Truth, so proper to the Understanding, that no Sense could pretend any Share in it; it came not within the Reach of the Eye or Smell, it was too airy to be fingered; and I believe a thousand Demonstrations, though never so high-seasoned, would prove a meagre Regale to the Palate. Seeing therefore a material Soul can receive no agreeable Sensation, but from an Impression stamp'd on some Sense; and that the Pleasure
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of *Archimedes* was not the Object of any Sense, we must conclude it resided in the Soul, without Dependence on any Sense, and by Consequence that his Soul was immaterial.

Athym. They are a pack of *backney* Arguments, and sent upon all Expeditions ; they are a kind of *enfants perdue*, exposed in every Rencounter ; but after all, they are more fit for Appearance than Service. I have not Time at present to discover a Weakness ; in the mean Time, supposing the Soul immaterial, why must it be immortal ?

Euseb. The Arguments I propose are ordinary indeed, and lie in every Man's Way, but they are not less concluding, because obvious ; all may understand them, but no Libertine can answer them. You ask me why, from Immateriality, I infer Immortality ? Give me leave to put this Question ; Is the Mass of Matter, that makes up the World, naturally eternal ?

Athym. Yes.

Euseb. Can you prove it ?

Athym. Philosophers, if I am not mistaken, prove it thus ; God as Author of Nature never withdraws his Hand from any Creature but at the Exigence of some contrary Agent. Now Matter has no Contrary ; all the operative Qualities in Nature reside in Matter, and though they fall out among themselves, it enters not into the Quarrel, bending to neither side, it's a Friend to all. In fine, being the common Subject of Contraries, it can be opposite to none, and there lies out of the reach of Corruption.

Euseb. I receive your Reason, but then it answers your Query ; for if the Soul be immaterial, it must be spiritual ; there is no Mean between these two Extremes. It cannot be an Accident : For it's agreed on all Hands, that Man is a substantial Compound ; therefore the most noble Ingredient must be a Substance. Such is his Soul, without doubt, for this entitles him to Reason, and seats him above the Herd. The Soul therefore is a spiritual Substance, that is, a Spirit : Now, no material Agent can act upon a Spirit, because it can have no Opposition to it ; therefore, seeing
nothing

nothing in Nature requires its Destruction, it naturally requires to exist as well as Matter.

Indeed, as God gave it a Being, so he can at Pleasure recal the Gift; but then he must act as Sovereign, not as Author of Nature; for in this Quality he never withdraws his conserving Influence, but at the Exigence of some contrary Agent; now the Soul having no Contrary, God as the Author of Nature must conserve it eternally.

Albion. Your Arguments, though obvious, make, I confess, some Impression, and though they do not convince, at least, they persuade, but the Resemblance between Men and Beasts hangs cruelly in my Head; they are so like, that methinks, they must be made of the same Ingredients: Their Species is propagated by Generation, they grow up by Degrees, and receive Nourishment and Increase from Meat and Drink; ill Usage heats their Passions, Kindness cools 'em; they hear, see, smell, and taste, and regulate their Actions by the Senses; they lie open to Diseases, and at last sink under Age or Malady; is not this an exact Picture of Man? Does he not make as ignoble an Entrance into the World, and as shameful an Exit, as the vilest Insect? He rolls in Ordure nine Months, and then salutes the Light with Tears and Clamours; he begs a Livelihood of all Creatures, and courts the very Beast for Sustenance and Clothing; Passions grow upon him with Years, Age instils Vigour, and Malice sets them on Fire; his Brutality vies with that of Bears; and his Cruelty out-runs the rage of Lions; he is furnish'd with Senses as well as they, and gives himself over to their Direction: If Beasts languish under Diseases, is Man exempt from the Inconvenience? They both struggle with Distempers, dispute their Post, and then surrender to Death, and what remains but breathless Carcases. *Alexander* and *Bucephalus* lie on the same Level, the Dust of the Emperor has no Privilege above that of the Horse. Seeing therefore Beasts are mortal, why must we invest Man with Immortality? A Resemblance of Operations supposes

a Likeness of Principles ; and when the Effects are equal, it's against Reason to make the Causes unequal.

Euseb. In the first Place, your Argument proves as strongly the Immortality of Beasts Souls, at the Mortality of Man's.

Athym. Nay, then I'll forswear disputing.

Euseb. Would all Gentlemen take the same Resolution, Religion would be more regarded among us, and the Civil Government less divided ; for whosoever disputes Articles of Faith, believes none ; and it's a general Remark, that those who eternally enter upon Controversy, give more Evidence of Infidelity than Wit : This is, if I am not mistaken, your Argument ; there is a most perfect Resemblance between Men and Beasts ; both as to the Necessity of Dying, and to all the apparent Sequels of Death ; but Beasts die intirely, therefore Men die intirely.

Athym. It is.

Euseb. Let us now turn the Tables ; *There is a most perfect Resemblance between Men and Beasts, both as to the Necessity of Dying, and to all the apparent Sequels of Death ; but Men die not intirely, therefore Beasts die not intirely.*

Athym. Under Favour, you obtrude a wretched Sophism for a staunch Reason ; my Argument stands upon an avow'd Principle, whilst yours supposes the Question we contend for : It's agreed on both sides, the Souls of Beasts are mortal ; if therefore there appear an exact Conformity between them and Men, in the whole Series of their Life, and Sequel of their Death, I may very philosophically infer Mens Souls are mortal, seeing we both agree those of Beasts are ; but you cannot conclude the Immortality of Beasts Souls from that of Men, for this lies under Debate ; we are in quest of this Prerogative, and cannot determine whether Man owes his Claim to Nature, or Flattery, or Vision : The Consequence therefore drawn from one contested Antecedent is illegal ; it neither helps the Opponent, nor foils the Defendant.

Euseb. The Question is not what I believe, but what you can reasonably conclude precisely from the

Resem-

Resemblance between Men and Beasts. I say, you can no more infer the Mortality of human Souls, than the Immortality of those of Beasts. We see the one and the other die, but the Sense is unable to bring any News of the Soul, though you send them on Discoveries: If you venture upon a Dissection of their Bodies, you may come at the Distemper that carried them off: But you will meet with no Symptoms of Mortality or Immortality; your Argument has no Advantage over mine.

But I acknowledge, say you, that the Souls of Beasts are mortal; but then remember, I believe those of Men to be immortal. If therefore you abandon the Resemblance, and cast the Cause upon my Authority; rely upon it, in one Case as well as in the other: If it is of no weight for the Immortality of Man's Soul, why shall it enter into the Proof of the Mortality of Beasts?

If the Reasons with which I establish the Mortality of the Souls of Beasts, prove the Mortality of those of Men, you come up to the Point; in this Case my Reasons might help on your Argument, but not by Authority; but alas, Sir, the Reasons for the one side have no Relation to those of the other: Those that maintain the Mortality of Beasts are foreign to Man, and would remain in their full Strength though he were not in Being.

To draw to an End, I grant the Souls of Beasts are mortal, and that there is a great Resemblance between them and Men; the Question is, what can be legally inferred from this Similitude? I say nothing, but that all that is animal in Man dies; his Body dies, his sensitive and vegetative Life end, and all those Faculties that depend on corporeal Organs cease with the last Breath. This is a fair Inference, and all Christians receive it; but then it stops at the animal Part of Man without touching the reasonable, whose Being and Operations have no Dependence upon Matter.

But you reason as ill as you believe, and your Logic is of the same Stamp with your Tenet. *Man, say you, resembles Beasts in those Things that are common to both,*

both, merely as they are Animals ; therefore he resembles in those Things that are proper to him as Man. Again, Beasts die according to the sensitive Life, which is essential to Animals, but Man resembles Beasts in that which is essential to Animals ; therefore he dies as to the rational Life, which is not essential to Animals. In fine, Man is mortal as to his Body, therefore he is mortal as to his Soul. If this be Reason, what is Sophism ? To conclude from a Part of the Whole is a Solecism in Logic ; and to attribute to a thing absolutely, that belongs to it merely per accidens, is to defy Reason.

In fine, if there be a great Resemblance between some Operations of Men, and those of Beasts, there is as wide a Difference between others ; if therefore from a Conformity of Actions you infer a Similitude of Principles, pray suffer me to conclude a Difference of Principles from the Difference of Actions.

I have already thrown before you some human Operations that must proceed from a Principle wholly different from any that is to be found in Beasts ; and to go no further, What is there in Beasts that bears any Proportion to the Understanding ? It enters into the very Essence, and rifles the most abstruse Recesses of Nature ; it defines, divides and distinguishes ; its Motion outstrips the Winds, and its Rapidity distances Lightnings ; in a word, it embraces the Poles together, and at one intellectual Grasp, clutches the whole Extent of the Universe. Besides, Man's Soul calls all the material Faculties to Account, and minds the Senses of their Mistakes ; it impeaches the Fancy of Folly, and laughs at those Momo's it creates to fright us : If it be of the same Alloy with them, how came it by this despotic Power ? Who commissioned it to call them to the Bar, and to pronounce Sentence ? View all the Beasts of the Field, and Birds of the Air, and you will not find one whose Soul pretends to any Superiority, to any Jurisdiction over their Bodies ; they follow the Guidance of Sense, and believe the Intelligence of Fancy ; they correct no Errors, because they perceive none : Survey not their past Actions, nor consult upon the future ; for their Souls drawing their
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Origin from Matter, they derive all their Knowledge from their Senses, and thus in Nature being equal, can exercise no Act of Superiority ; for he who corrects must be more knowing than he who is corrected, and he who commands than he who is forc'd to obey. Seeing therefore the Soul of Man commands the material Powers, unmasks the Illusions of Fancy, and the false Reports of Sense, that it judges of Objects not according to the Representations of corporeal Organs, but of a superior Principle ; it must be more noble than Sense, superior to Imagination, independent of Matter, and consequently immaterial.

Athym. Well, Sir, we have waded into the Depth of the Controversy, it's time to retire : Your Arguments look fair without ; at my Leisure I will examine whether they are sound within.

Euseb. It's strange that Men who build their Infidelity upon Conjectures will yield to nothing but Evidence : Why so much Caution against Truth, and so little against Error ? Is it so much your Interest to be in the Wrong, and such a Grievance to be in the Right ? Spend some cool Thoughts upon the Matter ; *Spem ac Metum examina*, confront your Hope with your Fear ; examine what you shall gain if your Soul be mortal, what you will lose if immortal ; if immortal you forfeit all, if mortal nothing. If therefore the Question were merely problematic, you should stand for that Side that promises more, and threatens less ; *Et quoties incerta erunt omnia tibi fave*, if I am not mistaken I shall never deplore my Error, nor even perceive it ; but alas, Sir, if you are in the Wrong, you will once discover yours, and always deplore it, but never retrieve your Misfortune.

The Arguments of *Eusebius* made some Impression on the Gentleman, and this short Reflection more ; but the dismal End of that Arch-atheist *Theomachus* finished his Conversion ; so that I may say the Gentleman was rather scared than argued into a Sense of his Duty. *Eusebius* received in the nick of Time an exact Account of that unfortunate Gentleman's Death from a Friend in Town ; and it's so remarkable in all its Circumstances,

stances, that God seems to have permitted it for the Instruction of Posterity, and to convince Libertines, that he not only punishes their Impieties in the next World, but often in this. *Eusebius* read the Letter as follows.

HONOURED SIR,

PERMIT me to interrupt your Retirement with a short Account of a deplorable Accident: Your Antagonist *Theomachus* is no more; Divine Vengeance has overtaken his Impieties, and made his Punishment no less astonishing than his Crimes; he left the World a Convert indeed, but not a Penitent; for though he disowned Atheism, he retained the Sin, and delivered himself into the Hands of God's Justice, because he despaired of his Mercy: So that one would think he acknowledged a God merely to provoke him; for by denying his Mercy to be infinite, he forc'd him to exert his Justice, and dared him to damn him, in spite of all his Invitations to Repentance.

That unfortunate Harlot, that sometime before began his Ruin, at length compleated it; so true it is, that the Instruments of our Sins, prove often those of our Punishment, and that we find our Misery in those very Things in which we place our supreme Felicity: This Creature notwithstanding had nothing extraordinary to recommend her, but the Liberties of a Prostitute, and the Freedom of her Profession; unfurnish'd of one good Quality, she had gleaned up all the bad ones of the Sex: In a word, if her Face was fair, her Soul was black, her Forehead of Brass, and her Heart of Steel: However, she subdued *Theomachus*, and maintained her Conquest; he surrendered at Discretion, and to purchase her Favour made over his Heart, his Estate, Reputation, and in the End his Soul also to this Town-filth; for she was no better.

A Friend took Compassion of this poor Gentleman, and supposed he might conjure down his Passion, by exposing the Lewdness of his Idol: But alas, *Theomachus* was not only enchanted with the Charms of her Person, but (what is more incredible) with those of her Virtue: So that for Thanks he returned Curses, and asked Satisfaction for the Advice, instead of benefiting himself.

Nay, Sir, said the Friend, I shall soon make a Bankrupt, if I give good Counsel and pay for it too. I have discharged the Duty of a Friend, if you take me for an Enemy who can help it? My Intention is friendly, and my Counsel wholesome. Why do you misconstrue that, and turn this into Poison? It's no Injury to tell a Friend he is injur'd; no Affront to convince him he is affronted: Well, Sir, I abandon you to her Mercy, and I am sure I cannot leave you in worse Company.

Theomachus acquainted his Mistress with the Passage, and envenom'd his Friend's Discourse with a mortifying Comment; she flew out into all the Extravagances of Passion at the Recital, and would have melted into Water, had not Revenge set all her Humours on fire. She would by all Means, forsooth, abandon her Gallant, unless he vindicated her Honour, promulge his Cowardice, and curse his Ingratitude.

I am informed this was nothing but Artifice and Stratagem: She had been too prodigal of her Favours, to be nice of her Reputation, she had long since discharged both Honour and Conscience, and placed her Glory in the very Centre of Infamy. She had plumed poor Theomachus to feather her own Nest, and was now willing to remove him out of the way to make room for fresh Gallants; so that her Enemy's Death was the Pretence, and Theomachus is the real Design of her Revenge.

This poor Gentleman had no mind to appear to the Sword in Defence of his Mistress; he knew her Cause was as bad as his Skill; but however, overcome by her Importunity, he sent a Challenge, and requir'd an Answer; this done, raised more Pity than Anger in his Friend's Breast. Theomachus, said he, has lived her Slave, he has now a mind to turn Knight-errant, and die her Martyr: Tears may indeed wash out her Crimes; but all the Blood in his Veins is unable to restore her Innocence. I have performed the Office of a Friend, he provokes me to add that of an Enemy: He scorns my Counsel, and importunes me for a Stab; but if Ill-nature deserves Resentment, it shall not move me to Revenge.

However, Theomachus was on fire, and the Jilt blazed it into a Flame, he met his Friend, and drew upon him with
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the Rage of an Enemy, but Fortune declared against him as well as Justice; the Sword slipt through his Lungs, and he fell speechless to the Ground: He was carried home in a Trance, and every body supposed he breathed his last; his Miss, who had been instrumental to his Misfortune, was all Sorrow without, all Joy within; she wept in earnest, but mourned in jest, and indeed her Grief appeared too extravagant to be real: Reason at length returned, and Theomachus with rowling Eyes, and deep Sighs cried out, Where am I? Oh, I burn and freeze, Fire and Ice pass through every Vein; methinks I feel all the Pains of the Damned. I leave Time behind, and stand upon the Brink of Eternity.

What, says a Gentleman, is then the Soul immortal! Is there a Hell to punish Crimes, and a God to inflict the Punishment? I thought the Existence of a God was Vision, and of a future State, Fable and Romance.

Passion, replied Theomachus, concealed those Truths, Death discovers the Heart may be an Atheist, but not Reason. What we earnestly desire, we easily believe: A vehement Passion supplies the Place of Demonstration; but now, alas, the Prospect of Death has laid those Vapours, that interposed between Time and Eternity; the Curtain is drawn, and I take a full Survey of that boundless Ocean without Bottom, without Shore.

The Company overjoyed at this unexpected Conversion, called a Divine to bring him to a perfect Sense of his Duty; he laid before him all the Motives, Charity and Learning were able to suggest, and pressed them home with such a moving Emphasis, that all melted into Tears, besides the unfortunate Gentleman whom they most concerned.

Sir, said the Divine, your Glass is run; few Moments divide you from Eternity: You stand upon the last Confines of Time, and will either fall into the Torments of the Damned, or fly up into the never-ending Pleasures of the Blessed. Impenitence conveys you to Hell, a hearty Repentance into Heaven; tho' your Sins are great, God's Mercy is greater; ask Pardon, he will not refuse it; a contrite Soul disarms his Justice, and turns his Severity into Mercy.

The sick Man shewed more Symptoms of Rage than of Repentance at the Discourse, and seemed rather sullen than moved with the Exhortation.

At last, I remember the Time (cry'd he, with a doleful Accent) when those Words would have dissolved me into Tears, and split my Heart with Sorrow; but now, alas, my Eyes are drier than a Flint, and my Heart more obdurate than Marble: I see my Crimes, and tremble at the Prospect, but cannot detest them.

If you cast one Eye, replied the Divine, on the Heinousness of your Sins, pray turn the other to the Greatness of God's Mercies; if the one breeds Despondence, the other Hope and Confidence: One I have sinned to the Lord, freed David from the Guilt of Adultery and Murder. The good Thief mounted the Cross a Criminal, and was taken down a Saint; yet one memento mei wrought his Change, and raised him from Hell to Heaven. Peter, the Favourite of JESUS CHRIST, basely disowned his Master, and backed Apostacy with Oaths and Perjury; yet no sooner did he deplore his Sin, but Christ pronounced his Pardon, and received him into his Favour.

These Instances, good Sir, said Theomachus, come not up to my Case; they transgressed their Duty through Frailty; human Infirmary had a greater Share in their Falls than Malice; and thus they seem rather worthy of Compassion than Punishment; but I have not only scorned God's Laws, but slew in his Face; I have defied his Person, and denied his very Being: An infinite Justice must chastise such a flaming Insolence; nay, and will; my Sentence is pronounced, and nothing remains to complete my Misery but the Execution.

At least (replied the Divine) ask Pardon! To be damned out of a Fear of being damned is extraordinary. God has engaged his Word, he will not refuse his Mercy to those who sincerely implore it: He invites, he solicits you to accept his Offer, why will you oblige his Goodness to abandon you to the dismal Resentments of his Fury? Has Hell such Charms? Are his Threats so inviting, and his Promises so frightful?

*The Loss of Heaven, answered Theomachus, bolts Darts of Sorrow and Rage through every Artery; and the very Apprehensions of Hell stretches my Limbs upon all the Racks, all the Tortures of the Damned; methinks I feel the dire Embraces of those merciless Flames, and smell the Vapours of Fire and Brimstone. Did I repent, God I know
would*

would receive me into his Mercy, but I cannot, I will not. Scarce had he finished this desperate Harangue, which moved the Standers-by to Horror, Indignation, and Compassion too; but mustering up all his Forces, he raised himself up, and clasping his Arms about his Mistress's Neck, For thee, (said he) alone do I desire to live; in Defence of thy Honour I die, thou hast been my sole Happiness in this Life, and I will have no other in the next. In this Posture expired Theomachus, an unhappy Instance to himself of God's Judgment upon Atheists, but I hope it may prove fortunate to others. I am,

Honoured Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

N. N.

Eusebius read the Letter with Tears, and the Company heard it with Transports of Admiration; all pitied the Gentleman's Misfortune, and blamed his Obstinacy. Well, said Athymius, I see Atheists and Libertines are less satisfied with their Principles than they pretend; they will stand for them *usque ad aras*, to the Death-bed, but then when they step into Eternity, they leave them behind. If there be a God in the other World, certainly there is one in this; and if our Souls are immortal when we die, they are Immortal whilst we live. Theomachus swore the Soul into Matter, and heftored God out of Being, but could never reason them into nothing; his Rhodomontadoes ended in Trembling, and his Laughter in Despair. God has left his Punishment a sad Memorandum to the Living; I will profit by his Misfortune, and not instruct Posterity by my own.

Eusebius was scarce come to himself; the Letter cast him into a melancholy Contemplation of Theomachus's Disaster, and God's severe Justice upon the wretched Gentleman. At length, turning to the Company,

Theomachus,

Theomachus, said he, is gone, and his Death answers the Tenure of his Life ; his Pleasures have taken Wing, and what remains but a Coffin for his Body, and a Lake of Fire and Brimstone for his Soul. He fed high, like the rich Glutton, and drank higher ; and as he followed his Example in this World, so has he met with his Punishment in the other, and now cries aloud for a drop of Water to refresh his Tongue, as before for *Champaign* to oblige Sensuality. Gentlemen ! *Vanitas Vanitatum, omnia est Vanitas*, all temporal Enjoyments are vain and trivial, purchased with Pain, possess'd with Fear, and lost with Regret ; they disgust a good Man, and are unable to satiate an ill one ; they may glide upon the Organ for a Time, but cannot smooth the Heart ; they fawn upon the Senses, but always give a Stab at parting. There is no Pleasure here but in the Practice of Virtue ; this indeed is worthy the Purchase, and will pay Charges with Interest ; it raises a Man above Fear, and disencumbers him of all the uneasy Pangs of Desire ; it turns a Sinner into a Saint, it gives him in Hand a Title to Heaven, and the Possession in Remainder.

Let us allow some time to cool and sober Thoughts, and not make over our whole Lives to Merriment, that must end in Tears, or unrepented, in never-ending Despair. We walk on uneven Ground, and if we shut our Eyes, every Step leads us to a Precipice, from which there is no return : If Caution can give no Security, into what an Abyss will Negligence plunge us ?

Take up then, Gentlemen, and abandon Lewdness before it abandons you, turn Necessity into Virtue, and resign *de bonne Grace*, what within some Years you must in spite of Reluctance and Opposition : There is no *Recipe* against Death, no Protection ; its Stroke is sure, and often unforeseen ; and if it surprizes us unprovided, we are undone for ever, for on this Moment depends an Eternity : It's easy to prevent an eternal Misery, but impossible (when once we are fallen into Hell) to abate the Flames, or to extinguish them.

Oh

Oh the deplorable State of a damned Soul ! To feel *always all* the Evils, and *all altogether* that can be feared. What Death ! Never to enjoy the least Good that can be desired ! What Life ! To suffer always ! To despair always ! And never to hope, will be the eternal Employment of a Reprobate ! How little do Gentlemen believe this sad Truth ! How little do they comprehend it ! And this is the Reason they sin without Fear, without Remorse.

Oh the Folly of Men, who will not believe till Flames consume their Infidelity, but not their Crimes ! Till Repentance proves unprofitable, and their Misery becomes eternal.

F I N I S.



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